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The games masters show you exactly how to make the past a dynamic new reality

WORDS OF WISDOM

We name the word processors with the speed, the functions and the right prices

HARD BARGAINS

Save money, save time, save effort as we reveal which are the best hard disk drives

GAMES

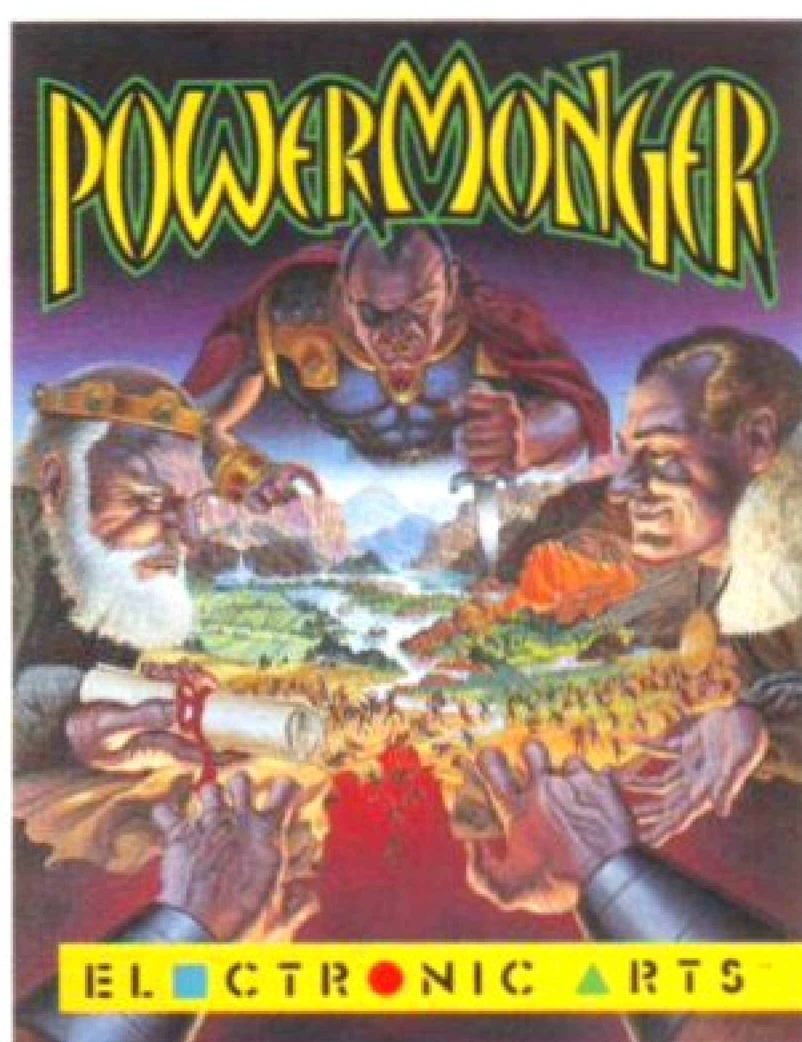
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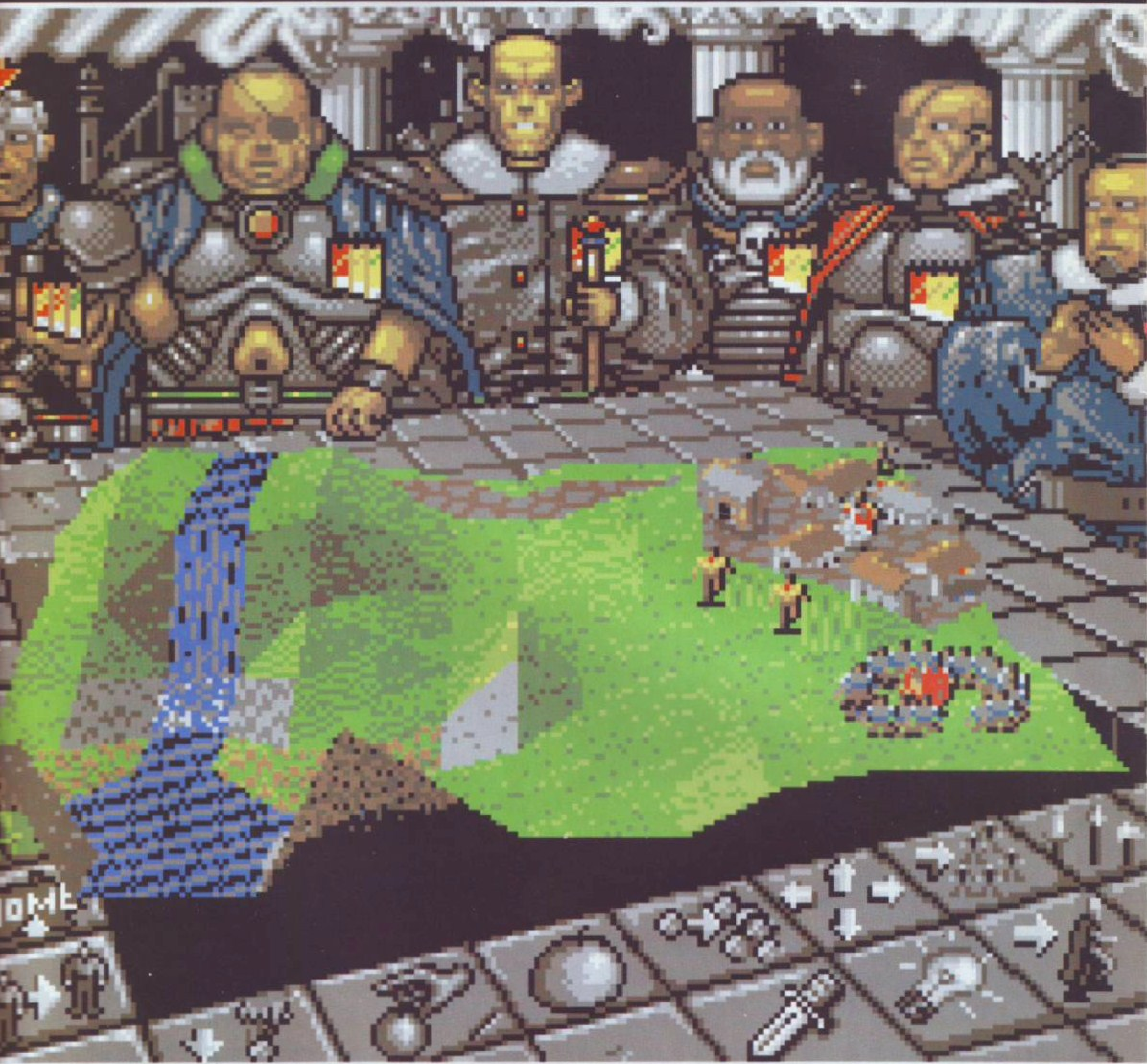
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EL



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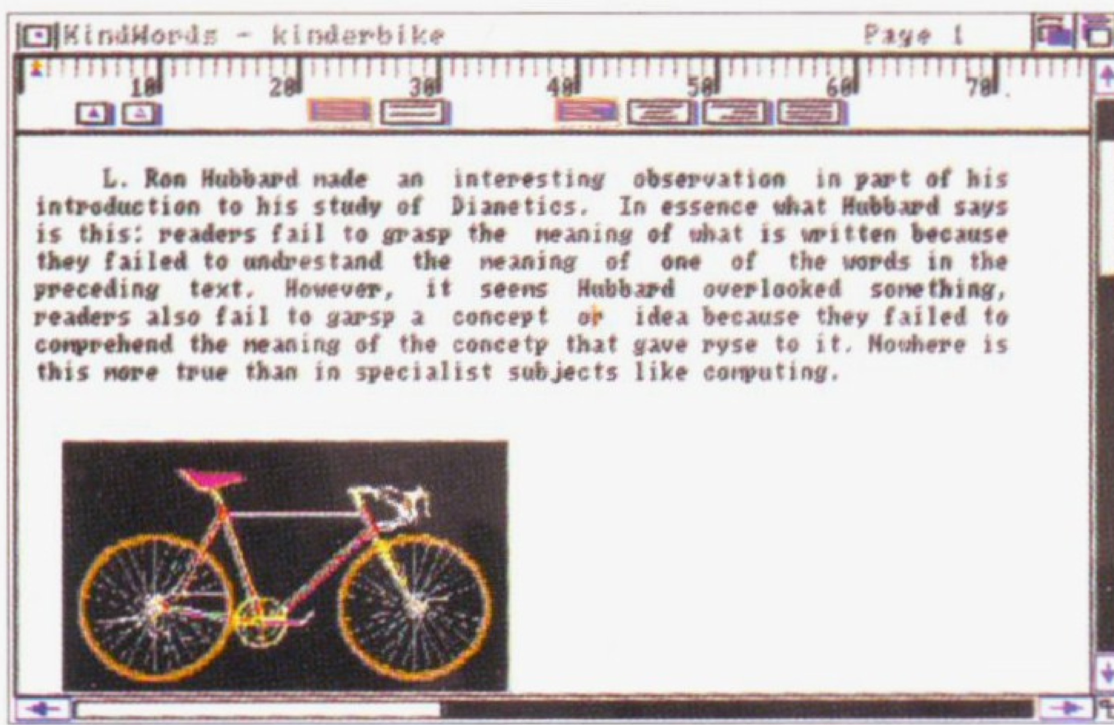
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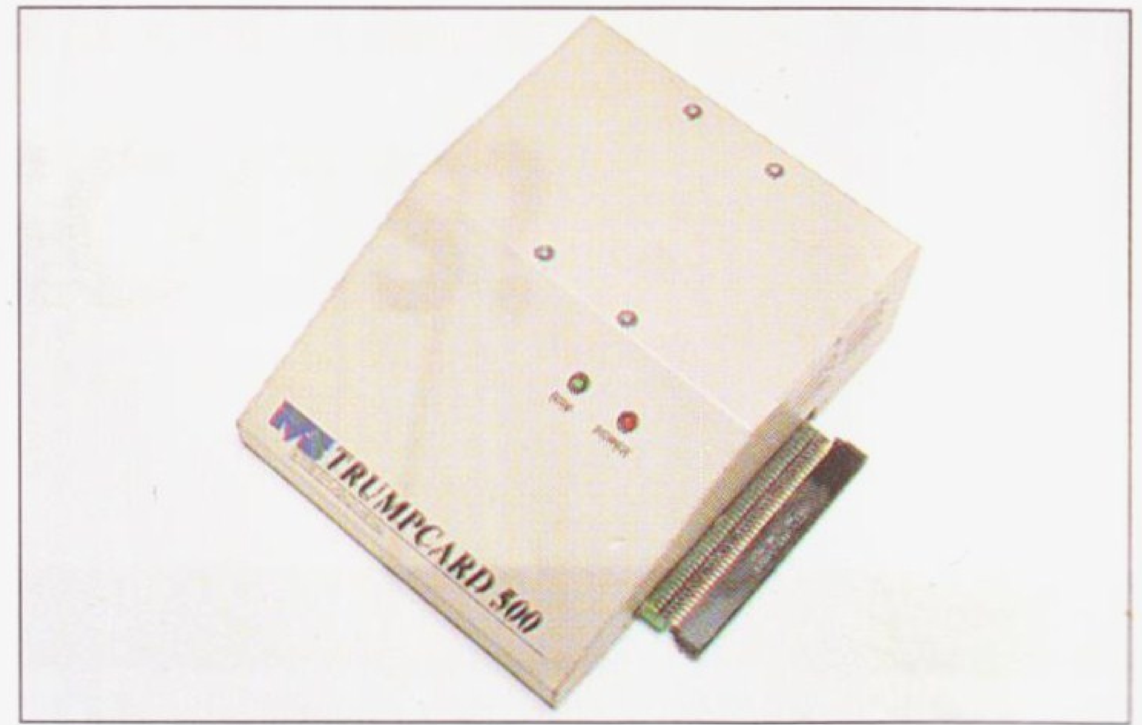
CREATING HISTORY 25

Making the past come to life



WORDS OF WISDOM 191

Which word processor is for you?



HARD BARGAINS 167

Check out the best in hard disk drives

COMPETITIONS

Colour Revolution p34

A bloodless revolution is taking place where the only thing flowing is 16 million colours onto your screen. 24-bit video and True Colour have arrived to transform the world of Amiga graphics. Join the revolution and check out how you can have the most stupendous graphics in the world.

AMIGA FORMAT 17 DEC 1990

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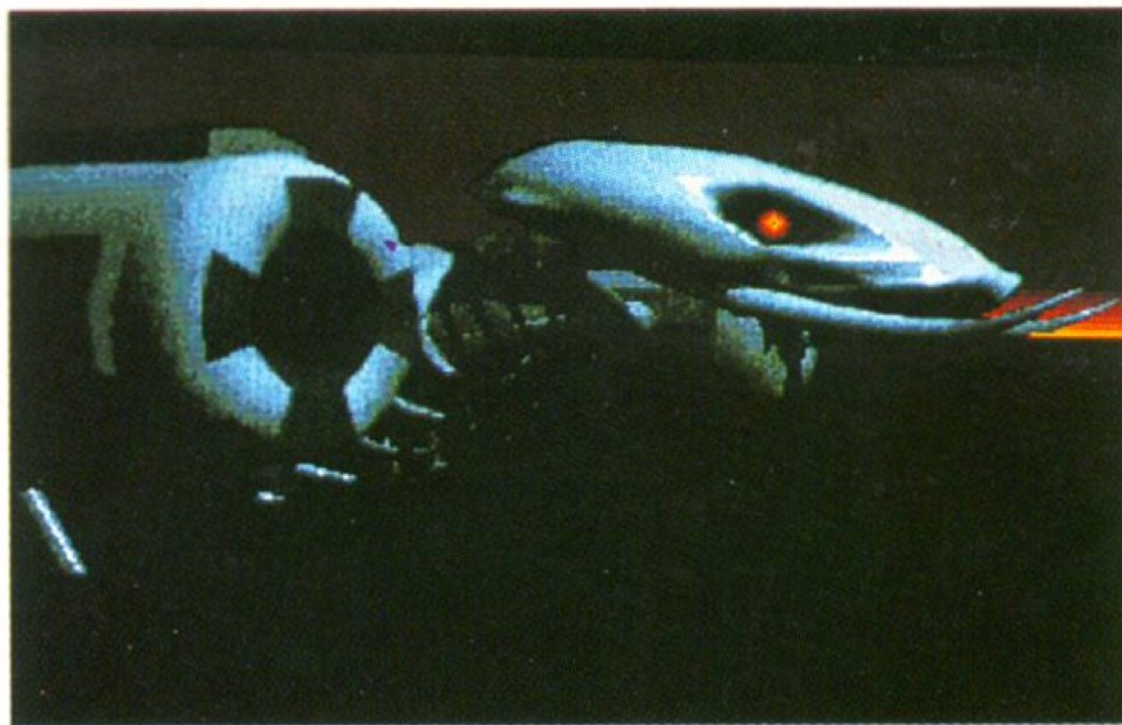
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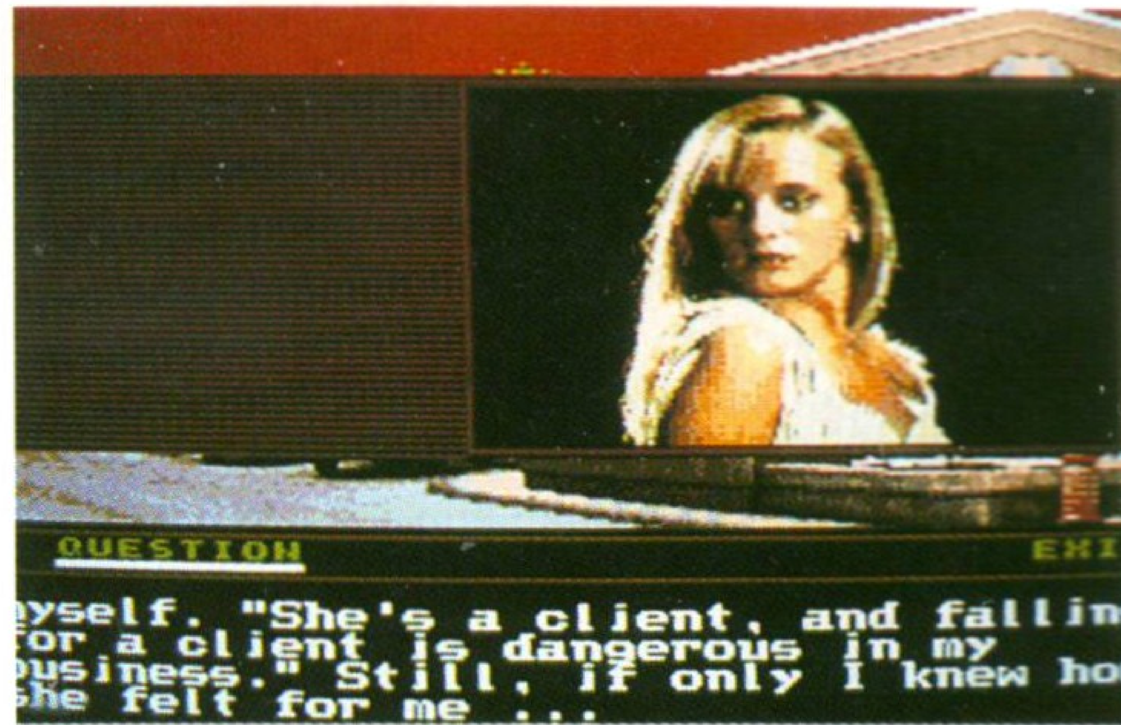
FRAMED! 233

You'll be hooked by the FrameGrabber



PLAYING FOR KEEPS 74

Can you survive the *Killing Game Show*?



GUNG-HO GUMSHOE 50

It's tough on those *Mean Streets*







Contents

SPECIALS

REVIEWS

REGULARS

Screenplay

FORMAT GOLD

REVIEWED

Disk Extra P99

THE ULTIMATE RIDE Mindscape
Climb aboard a throbbing beast of metal and rubber, burning its way across tracks around the world. Our demo is of the British stage, so watch out for the cows, sheep and four-wheeled , turbonutters.

PERSONAL FINANCE MANAGER Microdeal
Check out your finances with this handy demo.

HISOFT BASIC HiSoft
Check out this demo of a really great Basic.

REAL THINGS HUMANS RGB Studios
Delgihtful demo of the latest living animations.

ERR
A useful error handler for all Lattice C users.

SEARCH
Super AmigaDOS utility to accompany the programming feature on page 209.

PIC OF THE MONTH
Smashing image of a cosy sofa – it's comfortable!

SUBSCRIBE! P.125

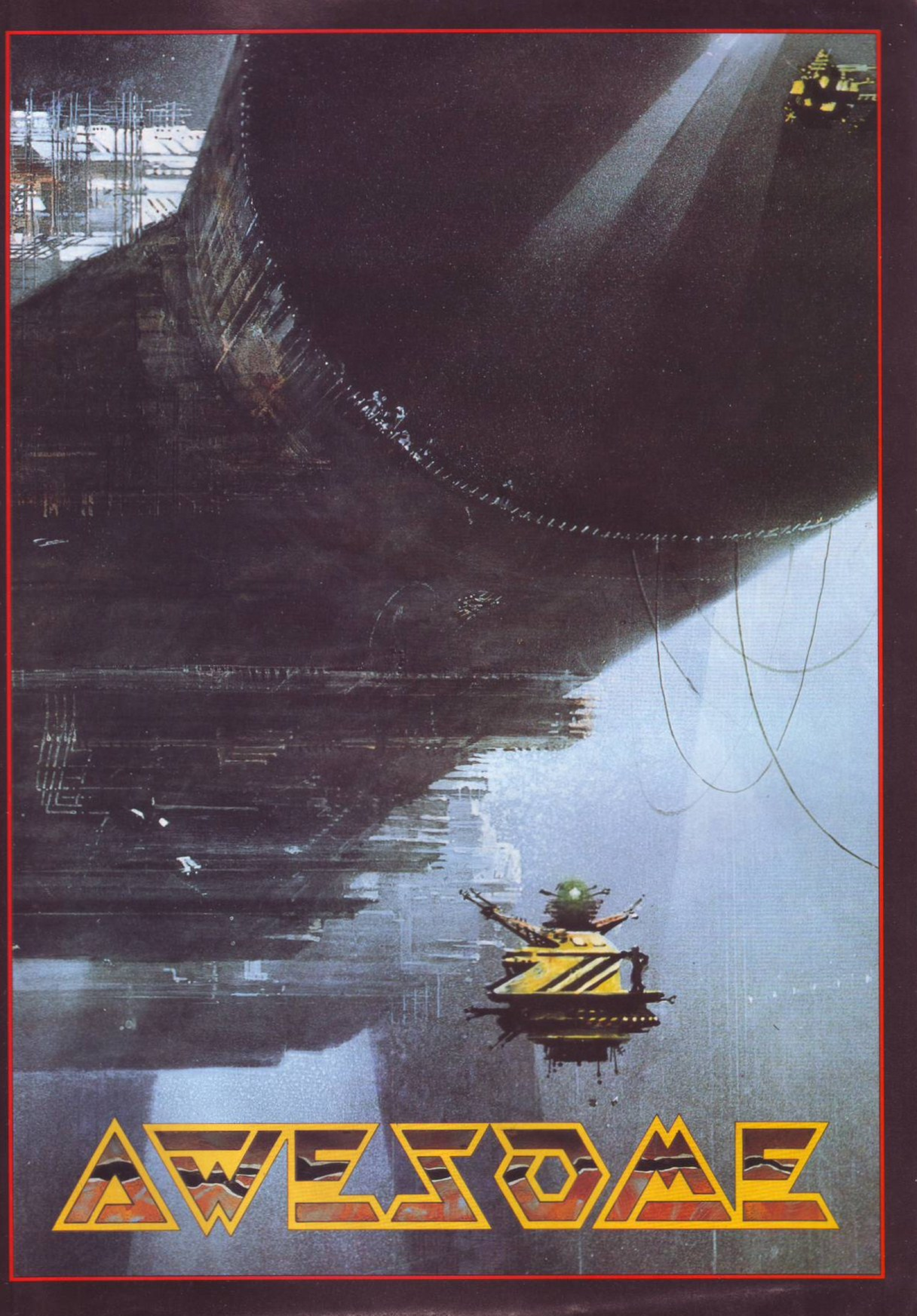
If you read *Amiga Format* every month, why not make sure of your copy by getting it delivered straight to your door? Save hassle, save money and get a free game, too! See Page **125** for details! Also, take advantage of our Mail Order bargains.

MAIL ORDER P.254

Registered Circulation **57,123** Jan-June 1990



Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations


AWESOME

AMIGA 1500 MAKES SURPRISE DEBUT

Commodore launch new addition to the Amiga range

In an unexpected move Commodore have launched a new addition to the Amiga range: the A1500 Personal Home Computer (PHC). The machine was viewed for the first time at the recent Business Solutions '90 show and it's an impressive package.

On the outside it looks like an A2000, but with two floppy drives instead of one floppy and a hard drive. It comes with a full megabyte of memory, a 1084S monitor, *Deluxe Paint 3, The Works, Their Finest Hour, Populous* and *Sim City* – the latter two including their expansion disks. Also included is our very own book, *Get the Most Out of Your Amiga*, which is an invaluable aid to any new Amiga owner.



The new A1500 Personal Home Computer, just announced by Commodore, promises not only to bring a new high-value Amiga deal, but may also open up a new market for home computers.

The new machine isn't that different from the 2000 – the hard disk is the only major loss – but the addition of the monitor and the software make it a very attractive proposition indeed. All three games are of a high quality and will appeal to a more adult audience. *Deluxe Paint 3* is the most recent version of this much-acclaimed art program and *The Works* is an integrated business pack that includes a spreadsheet, word processor and database. The 1500 PHC costs £999 – cheaper than the 2000 for what is arguably a better package – and it has all of the same expansion slots.

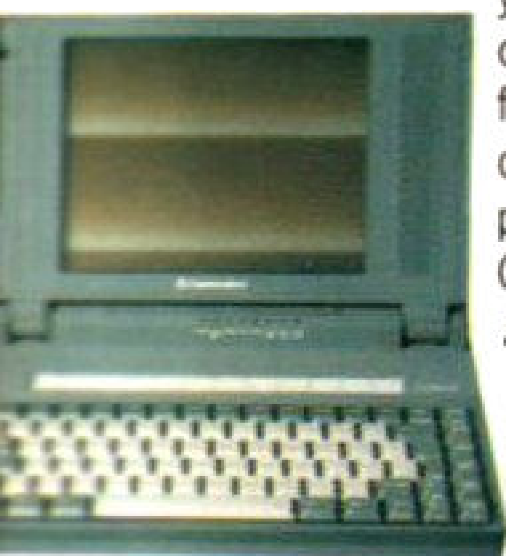
☎ Commodore 0628 770088

WIZ WHEEZE

Hot news from Ocean concerns the appearance of *Wizball II*, following the current trend of reworking classic 8-bit titles. To ensure the Amiga version is as good as its predecessor, Ocean have rehired the same team who programmed the original, Sensible Software. The new game should bounce onto the market early next year.

COMMODORE ON THE MOVE

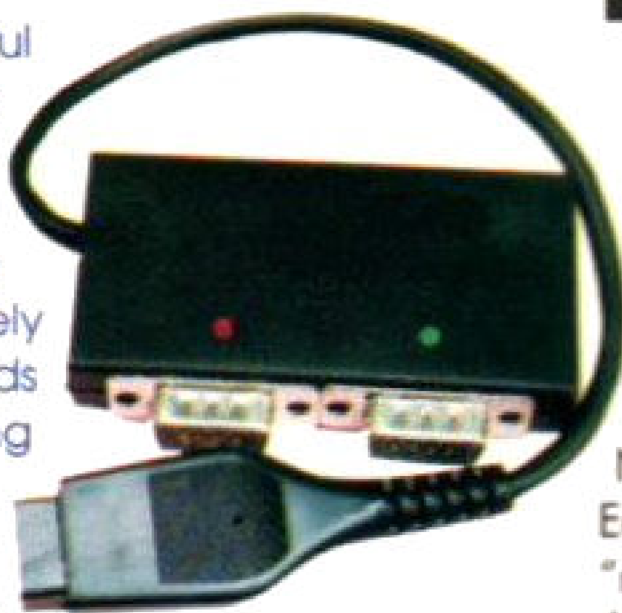
Commodore has entered the world of laptop computers with the C286-LT. Sadly it is an IBM-type PC compatible and not based on the Amiga, but it will still make a suitable portable companion for your Amiga, as discussed more fully last month in our piece on other portables. The C286-LT costs £1999, weighs 3.2 Kg, has a 20Mb hard disk, a 3.5" floppy drive and LCD screen.



☎ Commodore 0628 770088

QUICK-CHANGE ARTIST

The Stickshift is a helpful device that plugs into the mouse port and allows you to plug in a mouse and joystick to the same port and switch freely between the two. It avoids all that tedious plugging and unplugging when you want to play a two-player game with two joysticks. You don't even have to flick any switches, because the unit changes controls to the mouse or joystick automatically when one or the other is used.



☎ Meedmore 051 521 2202

FIRST STEPS UPDATE

Commodore's new educational bundle First Steps, reported in News last issue, has already received an endorsement from the National Association for Primary Education. In their own words it "represents an excellent spread of the types of software most suitable to support and enhance the child's mastery of Information Technology".



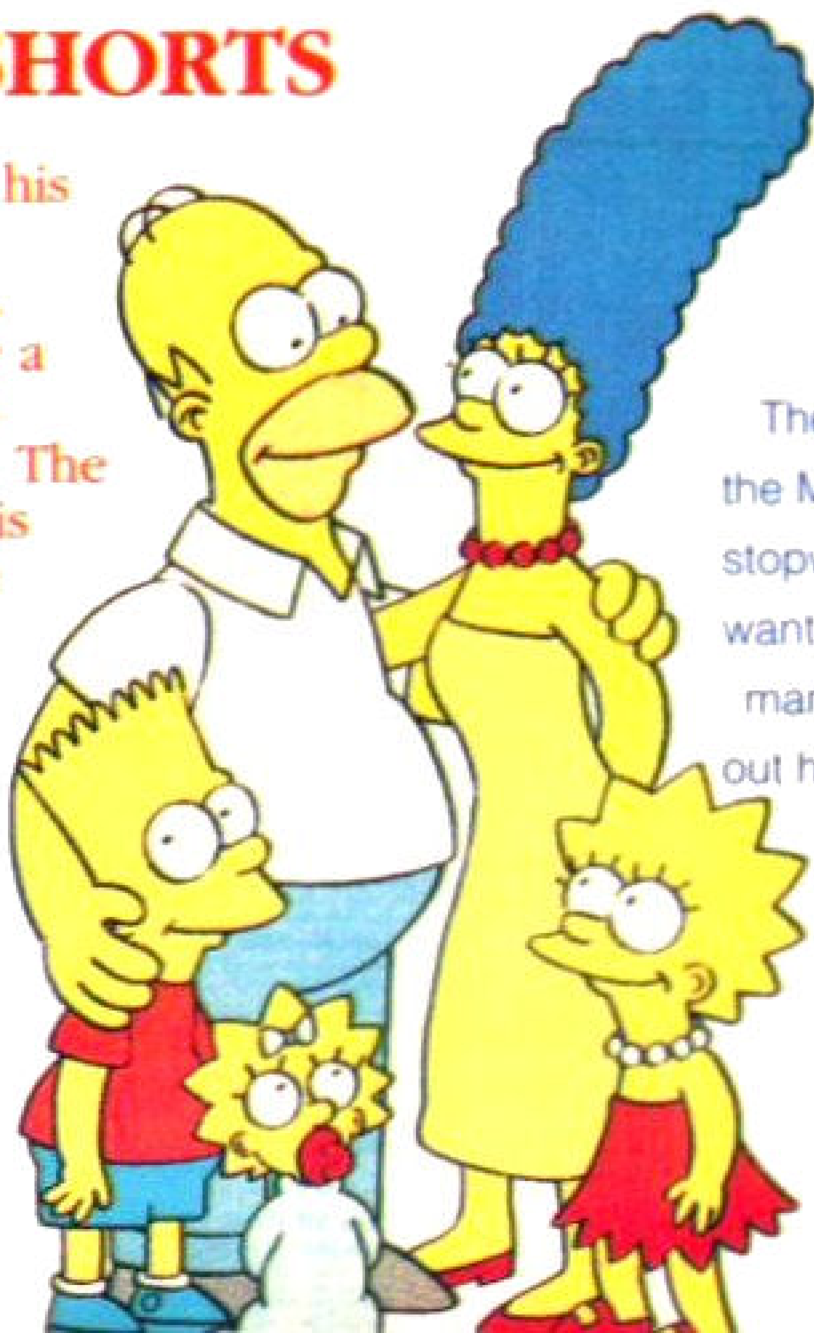
The £599 bundle contains an A500, TV modulator, A501 RAM expansion, ten blank disks, mouse mat, *Deluxe Paint II, Deluxe Print II, Pro Write 2.5, InfoFile, Music Mouse, Let's Spell at Home, Logo* with *Talking Turtle* and the *BBC Emulator*.

There's also a resource file of useful information, guides to the National Curriculum and an introductory video showing how to get the most from the whole bundle.

☎ Commodore 0628 770088

EAT MY SHORTS

Bart Simpson and his family have been nabbed by Ocean, who hope to have a game of the series ready for summer. The *Simpsons* cartoon is already one of the biggest shows on American TV and the Simpsons' recognisable yellow faces are already beginning to acquire cult status here.

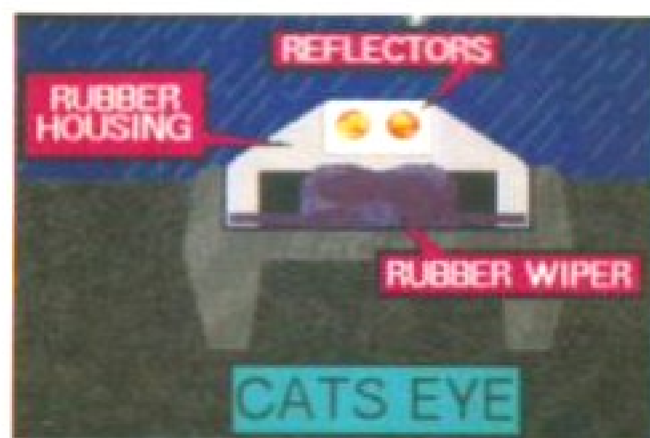


A STICK IN TIME

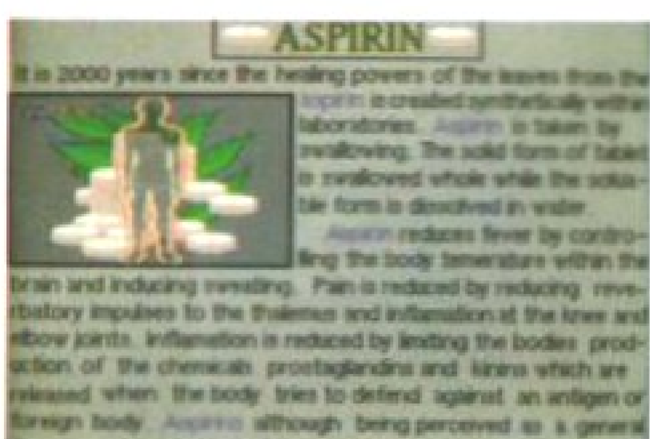
The latest in joystick novelties can be found on the Mega Board from Spectravideo – two stopwatches. It's aimed at two players who want to time their comparative performance or at the single player checking out how he's doing on each game. The stick costs £24.95 and also has autofire and a slow motion function. Oh, and as Spectravideo helpfully point out, the watches can tell the time.



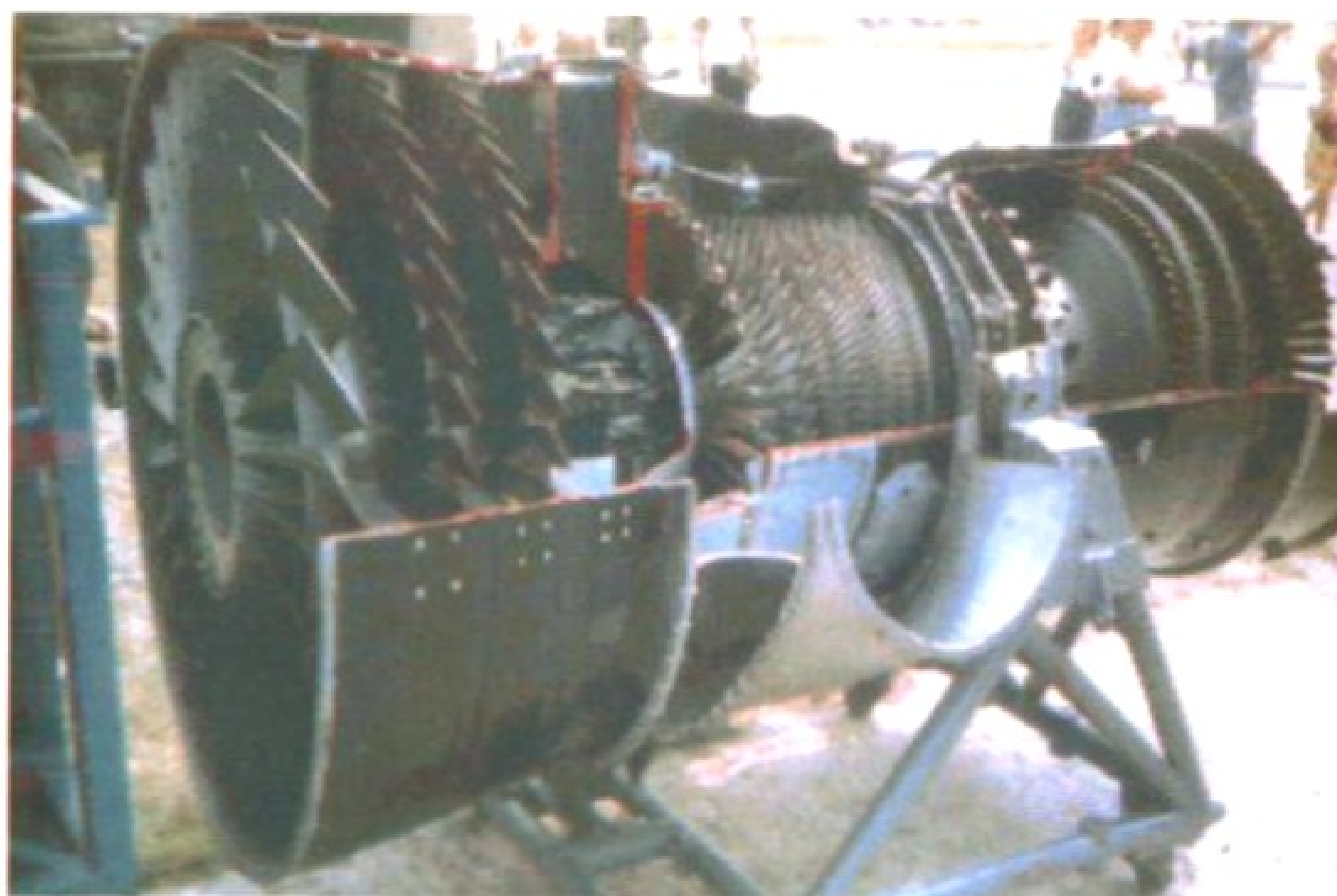








Frames from *Everyman's Technology*, the first book to be produced by Digigraphic.



Digigraphic's new authoring system for the CDTV, *Living Book Publisher*, will allow interactive 'books' to include stunning graphics and animation.

LIVING BOOKS

Authoring system brings books to life on CDTV

Among the developers working on products for the CDTV are Digigraphic, who are working on a multi-media publishing system called *Living Book Publisher*. The system is intended to be a production tool for use with the CDTV and Digigraphic are already working on their first application, *Everyman's Technology Living Book*. This book covers many aspects of technology, explaining how various different bits of modern electronic and mechanical wizardry work. Areas covered include communications, entertainment, industry, medical and military.

Using the LBP authoring system, 'Living Books' can easily be created to include a large range of features:

- **Graphics, animation and full-motion video sequences of any size and display mode.**
- **A search facility that can find animations, video, pictures, audio and anything else with a textual tag.**
- **A narration option that reads pages out loud.**
- **A magnifier that enlarges lines of text.**
- **Electronic bookmarks to allow easy flipping between marked areas of any textual or graphic sequence.**
- **'Hot words' that can be selected and cross referenced to other sections of the book.**

***LBP* is due to be released in March 1991, but as yet a price has not been fixed. The first fruit of the authoring system, *Everyman's Technology*, has no fixed release date or price.**

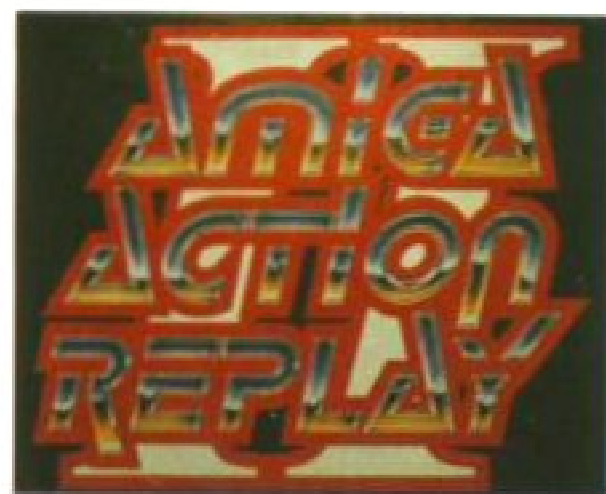
☎ Digigraphic 0455 558855

COMPLETE AMIGADOS GUIDE

Claiming to be the most complete guide to AmigaDOS ever, this new two-part publication is aimed at beginners but also promises to explore as yet untapped powers of the Amiga's operating system. Written by Amiga Format regular Mark Smiddy and award-winning journalist Bruce Smith, it covers a huge range of topics, needs no programming knowledge or software and comes with a disk full of DOS utilities. Price will be £21.95 for Volume One and £17.95 for Volume Two with both available for £39.90. Expect a review soon.

☎ Bruce Smith Books 0727 41243 (24 hrs)

REPLAYED AGAIN



Datel Electronics have released a Mk II version of their Action Replay cartridge that allows you to stop software in its tracks and grab graphics and sound and tinker with all sorts of things. The Mk II cartridge has all the features of the original plus a lot more.

It now saves music and picture files in IFF format, has a new 128K operating system, autofire manager, disk monitor, DOS commands and comes in a version for the 2000 as well. The A2000 unit costs an extra £10 but the Mk II cartridge costs the same as the original: a snip at a mere £59.99.



Datel Electronics 0782 744324

CDTV GOES ON SHOW

The CDTV will be making a working appearance at the Computer Shopper Show at the Wembley Conference Centre from December 6-9. It will be running Dr Feelgood, the health education program from Digita International.

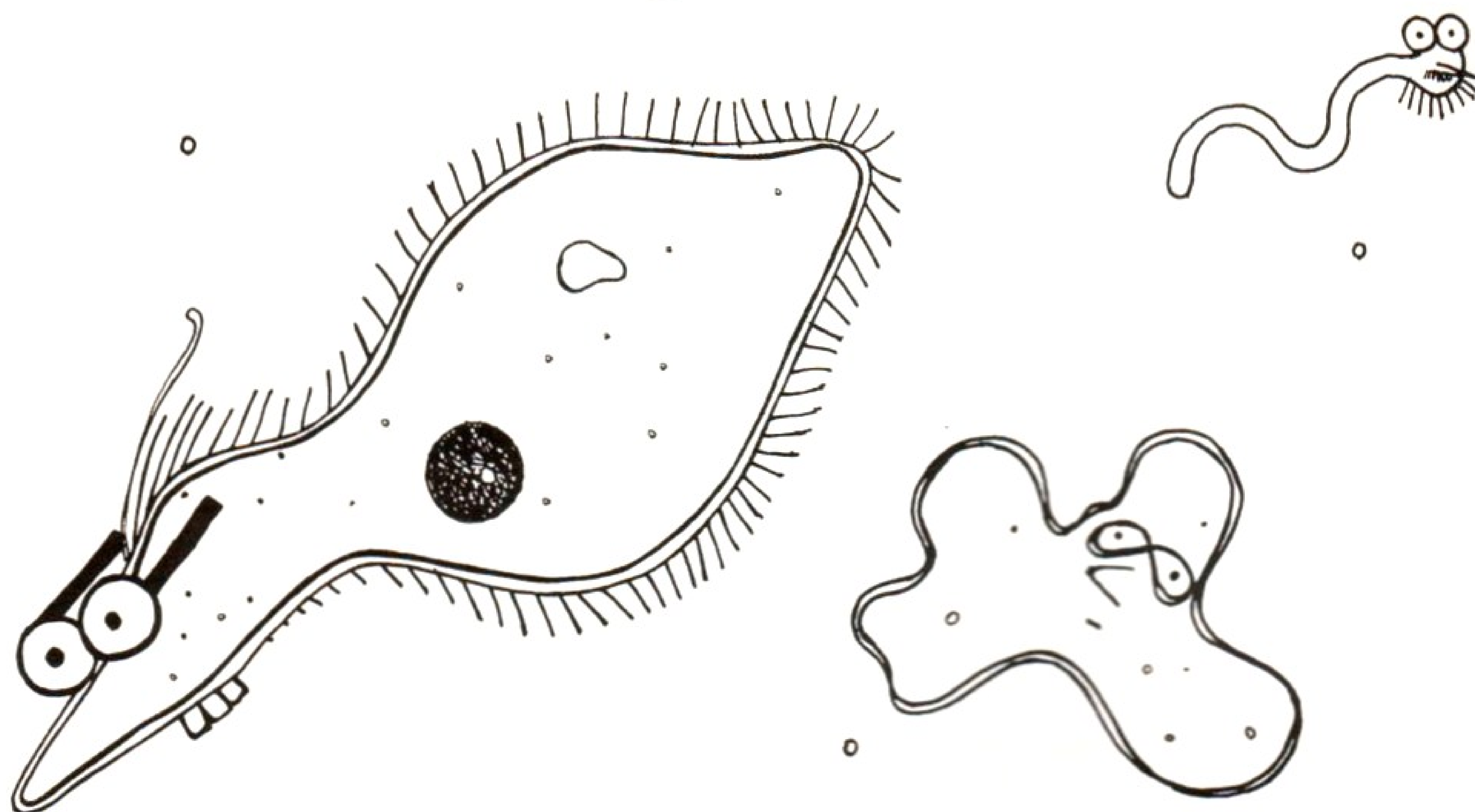
Other attractions at the show include an Advice Centre giving free advice on all software and hardware needs, the finals of the Computer Football Association Challenge Cup and a fund-raising appeal on behalf of the Starlight Foundation which grants the wishes of children who are chronically ill.

The voucher below, when presented at the show, will entitle you to 50p off the entry fee of £5 (£3.50 for under 16s) or £4 off the family ticket price of £17.



Now Includes Digipaint 1

We're not saying everyone should own a Digi-View Gold...



Protozoa, for example, have very little need.

Only one product has captured the imagination of Amiga users around the world: Digi-View Gold. It's the most award winning, best-selling and most used Amiga hardware product of all time. When Amiga owners want to digitize graphics they use Digi-View Gold. Period. In fact, we've probably sold more Digi-Views than any other digitizer on any PC in history.

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Requires standard gender changer for use with Amiga 1000. Dynamic HiRes requires 2 megs of RAM. Digi-View Gold is a trademark of NewTek, Inc.



GUNSHIP NEW FOR '91



MicroProse have finally confirmed that they are working on a sequel to the bestselling helicopter simulation *Gunship*. Provisionally entitled *Gunship 2000*, it features the next generation of assault helicopters, using current technology projected a decade into the future. The PC version will lead next June with an Amiga version following hot on its heels.

SHOWS GO ON

Yet another show is on the horizon – the third 16-bit Computer Fair at the Novotel, Hammersmith on the 4th-6th January 1991. More news on the goings on there when we get them.

GAZZA GETS SECOND SHOT

Paul Gascoigne, the most famous man in the universe and English World Cup hero, is to get a second bite of the games licensing cherry. The follow up to Gazza's Super Soccer, simply entitled Gazza, is due for release at the end of November and is rumoured to be an overhead horizontal scroller. Gazza will definitely be a strong contender for the Christmas number one slot. Gascoigne is known as 'Gazza' because of his uncanny likeness to Amiga Format new boy Gary Lord.



Young Gazza shakes hands with *Format* superstar Trenton Webb.

GARDENING SIMULATOR

Gardening is still growing in stature as one of Britain's most popular hobbies, so *Magic Garden*, new from Electronic Zoo, should be assured of popularity. You don't need to get your hands dirty – a gnome called Grobble does the spadework while you watch the garden flourish – but you do need to watch out for magical surprises and sabotage from envious outsiders. Billed as ideal for those who don't like spiders, slugs and snails or don't have gardens, *Magic Garden* will be out in January



The creators of the world's first computer garden are, left to right, Rick, Nick, Deborah, a gnome and Alan.

THE AMIGA FORMAT SOFTWARE CHART

Position	Last Month	Title	Publisher	Price	AF Rating
1	(5)	Corporation	Core Design	£24.99	
2	(1)	Kick Off 2	Anco	£24.99	FG94%
3	(2)	Shadow of the Beast II	Psygnosis	£34.95	87%
4	(-)	Wings	Mirrorsoft	£29.99	79%
5	(7)	Midnight Resistance	Ocean	£24.99	69%
6	(3)	Shadow Warriors	Ocean	£24.99	42%
7	(9)	F29 Retaliator	Ocean	£24.99	FG92%
8	(4)	Lost Patrol	Ocean	£24.99	79%
9	(-)	Days of Thunder	Mindscape	£24.99	
10	(13)	Operation Stealth	US Gold	£24.99	FG90%
11	(6)	Turrican	Rainbow Arts	£19.99	88%
12	(15)	Battle of Britain	US Gold	£29.99	FG90%
13	(16)	AMOS	Mandarin/Database	£49.95	
14	(8)	Midwinter	Rainbird	£29.99	FG92%
15	(10)	Shadow of the Beast	Psygnosis	£34.95	78%
16	(19)	BSS Jane Seymour	Gremlin Graphics		
17	(-)	Battlemaster	PSS	£29.99	83%
18	(11)	Imperium	Electronic Arts	£19.99	86%
19	(-)	The Immortal	Electronic Arts	£24.99	78%
20	(-)	Back to the Future II	Mirrorsoft	£24.99	
21	(-)	Serius 7	CRL	£19.99	
22	(-)	Gremlins II	Elite	£24.99	79%
23	(-)	Heroes	Domark	£29.99	
24	(21)	Emlyn Hughes Int. Soccer	Audiogenic	£24.99	79%
25	(-)	TNT	Domark	£24.99	
26	(17)	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	Ultragames	£29.99	
27	(-)	Pool of Radiance	US Gold	£29.99	
28	(24)	Falcon Mission Disk II	Mirrorsoft	£19.99	
29	(-)	Magic Fly	Electronic Arts	£24.99	88%
30	(12)	Damocles	Novagen	£24.99	FG92%

This chart is compiled by Gallup Ltd. © European Software Publishers Association 1990.



Despite the fall of *Kick Off*, sport sims still rule the generic roost. Of all 100 hundred chart games an incredible 14 had a sports theme (eight of which were soccer titles). In second place came cars, which have inspired 13 racing games. Adventures and RPGs stacked up 12 chart entries along with nine movie or TV licences. Bringing up the rear were seven arcade conversions, four flight sims and two sub sims. Of these *Red Storm Rising* has the remarkable distinction of being the only book licence to make it big.



Curiouser and curiouser. Nearly a year after they first hit the streets *Chase HQ*, *Operation Thunderbolt* and *Batman the Movie* have suddenly leapt back into the chart at 96, 99 and 57th positions respectively! Is *Chase HQ* (a former No 1) seeing a similar renaissance to that enjoyed by *Shadow of the Beast*, now that *SCI – Chase HQ II* is in the offing? If that is the case then where will the old chart-topper *Robocop I* end up when *II* is released this Christmas?



Predictions corner. Next month's Number One biggie will be *Captive*, an Issue 16 Format Gold winner. Watch and wait, then send mocking postcards marked 'Ha! Got it wrong, pal!' to the usual address.



***Wings* flies in at Number 4! The World War One flight game from Cinemaware is the highest new entry of the month. Not bad for a game that was only available in 1 Meg form. Expect to see further chart-climbing now Mirrorsoft have announced that they've a 1/2 Meg version ready for take off.**



What, no *Kick Off* in the Top Spot? Yes, the mighty soccer sim has tumbled a massive ONE place, giving pole position to *Corporation*. Has the super-cyber adventure done the impossible and weaned gamesplayers away from football? With the heavy Christmas chart wars just around the corner, it could well signal the end of *Kick Off 2*'s winning streak.

THIS BEAT IS AUDIOMASTER

A new package, including the highly-acclaimed sampling software *Audiomaster III*, is available from Trilogic including their Mk II Stereo Sampler. It's the same software that's in the Audio Engineer package reviewed in Issue 15 of AF (p135), but currently it's on special offer for £99.99 – half the price of Audio Engineer. The hardware is different but it can sample at rates of over 100K samples per second.

☎ Trilogic 0274 691115

NEXT MONTH

IT'S BIGGER, IT'S BETTER, IT'S GOT TWO DISKS!

Next month, treat yourself to the most extraordinary Amiga magazine ever. We've put together an unprecedented and unrivalled line-up of goodies that no Amiga owner can afford to miss. What's so special about it? Take a look at this lot...

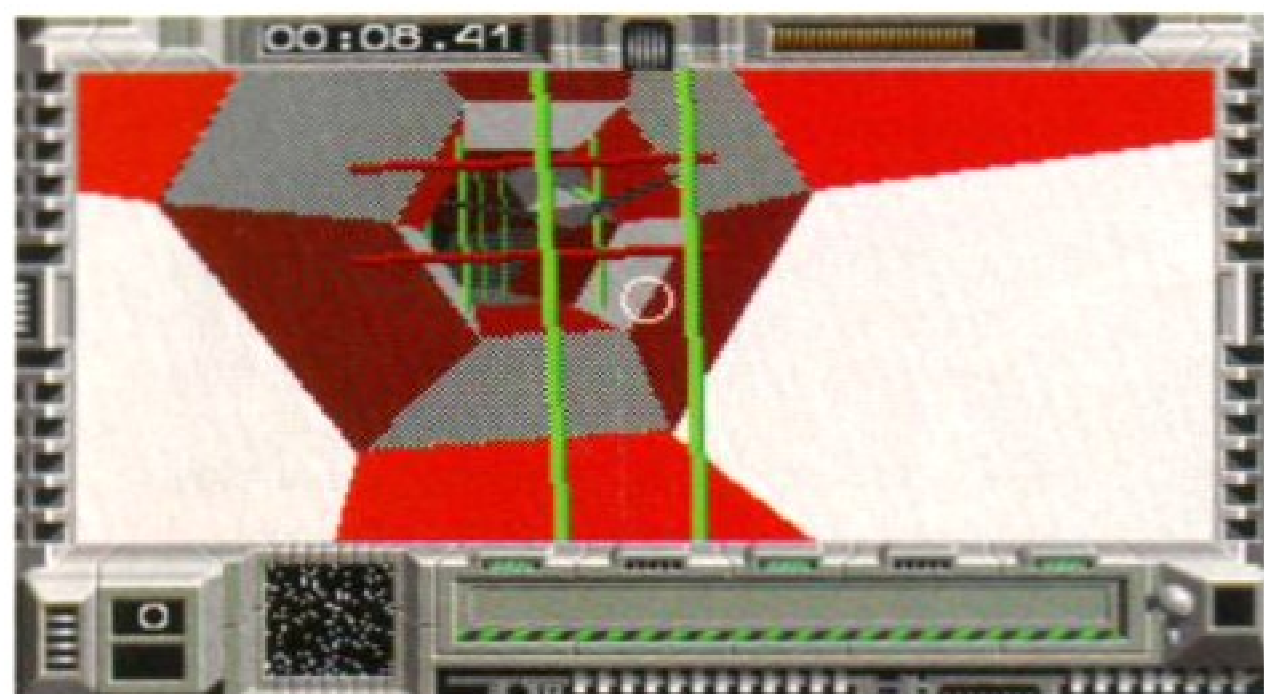
TWO DISKS

That's right TWO disks. Thanks to a very special deal, we're able to bring you a complete free game – the completely amazing *Interphase* from Imageworks – plus playable demos of *Total Recall* from Ocean and *Lemmings* from Psygnosis and a whole host of utilities and other programs. It means the price of the mag goes up to £3.95 for this issue, but just look at what you're getting...

Why not guarantee yourself not just the Christmas issue but all the amazing ones to follow in 1991? Take advantage of the subscription offer on Page 125.

WELL OVER 300 PAGES!

We're busting through the 300-page barrier next month to give you more for your money than ever before. We'll be doing more editorial pages than it's sane to do in one month.



This is an example of the sort of stunning 3D graphics you'll be getting in the arcade section of our free complete game *Interphase*, but there's an absorbing puzzle side as well.

INTERPHASE

COMPLETE FREE GAME

This isn't some average budget game you'll play a few times and forget about, this is the business – a high-class combination of 3D, solid vector graphics and a fascinating strategy and puzzle game. You won't just be getting the game either, there will be full documentation and playing tips to get you started in the mag. In Issue 4 of *AF* we rated *Interphase* 88%, but don't just take our word for how good it is: here's what some of the other computer magazines thought of it.

"Highly recommended to gamers who want all of the thrills of aerial combat with a cerebral element as well."
ACE Rating 915, ACE

"A huge, deeply absorbing interactive game." **90%, CU Amiga**

"Interphase has excellent puzzles, blasting and graphics wrapped up in one intriguing package."
90%,The Games Machine

"3D vector can really put some atmosphere into a game, and when you combine this with Interphase's gameplay and addictiveness you really do come up with a winner both in graphics and lasting appeal."
80%, Amiga Action

Interphase originally cost £29.99 and just over a year after its release it is still a superb example of the best 3D graphics and gameplay you can find on the Amiga. Even if you don't usually like games you'll be fascinated and hooked by this one.

AMIGA FORMAT
ISSUE 18
CHRISTMAS 1990
PRICE £3.95
ON SALE
DECEMBER 13TH
DON'T MISS IT



40 PAGES OF GAME REVIEWS

More pages and more reviews than ever before – a bumper Christmas bundle of games presented in a brand-new style. Don't miss this special section where you'll find the BEST reviews of ALL the big games.

TOTAL RECALL DEMO

There's a playable demo of the Ocean game based on the blockbusting movie – don't miss Arnie strutting his muscular stuff.

LEMMINGS DEMO

Yet another playable demo (can you cope with all this?) of a suicidal new game from Psygnosis. Don't go near any cliffs until you've played this.

VISIONS OF THE FUTURE

Fascinating feature on the way games present the future and a good look at what games are going to be setting the Amiga alight in 1991.

ROBOTS

Get to grips with the world of robots and artificial intelligence. How do you connect the Amiga to robotic devices and what can it do once you have?

GAMES OF THE YEAR

We name the games of 1990 that you can't afford to be without.

BEGINNERS

Just got your Amiga and can't make head nor tail of it? Fear not, we'll be on hand to ease you through those bewildering beginnings.

3D GRAPHICS

Feast your eyes on the latest software for creating stupendous 3D and ray-traced graphics.

PLUS

All the regular features including: Testbench looking at new hardware, PD Update testing the best in free software, Workbench giving helpful tips and answering problems, Gamebusters showing you how to beat games, Music bringing pleasure to your ears and, as always, Reviews of all the new serious software and hardware we can find!

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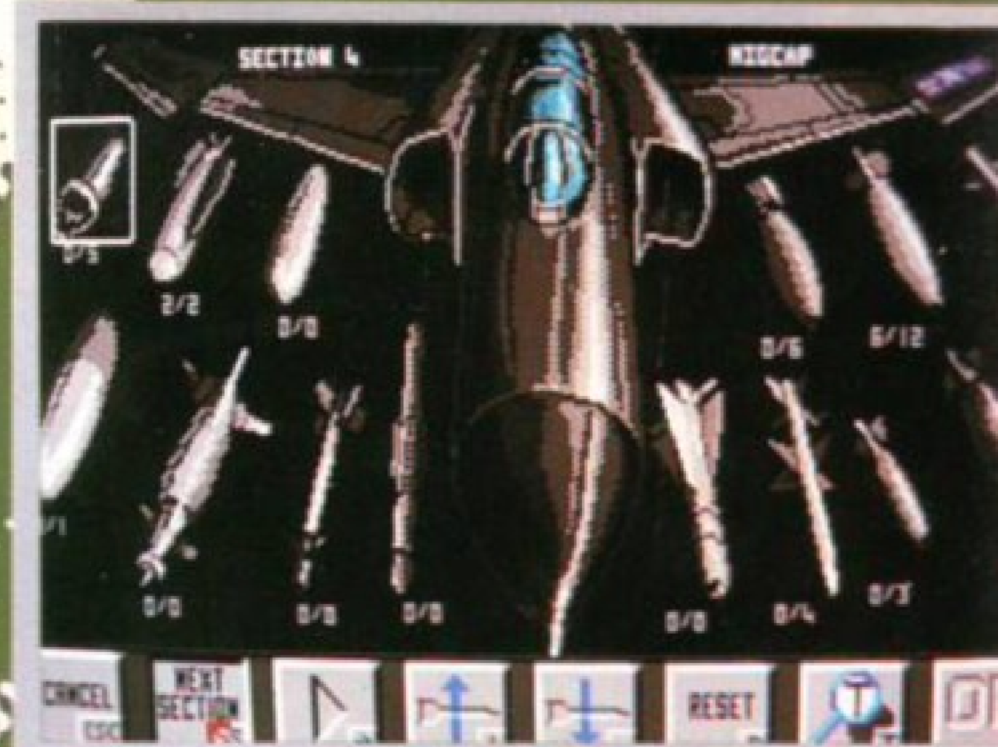
Only team work will get you back alive. The "IRON HAND" flights must destroy or suppress the surface to air missiles whilst Combat Air Patrol aircraft circle high above the strike force looking out for enemy aircraft. Finally, the strike aircraft must find and attack the target braving a hail of small arms and anti-aircraft artillery fire at low level. Individual survival is not the only measure of success, it is the success of the mission as a whole that counts – there is no place for seekers of individual glory.

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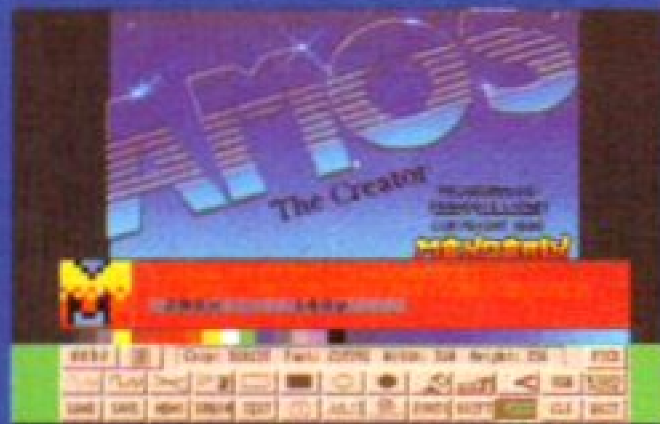
BY THE AUTHORS OF FALCON

AMOS

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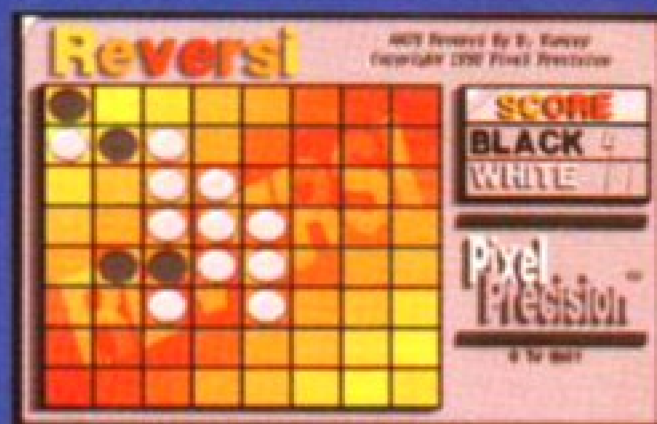
Cartoon Capers: Hilarious paw to claw fighting game with attention-grabbing digitised sound effects [Available soon]



AMOS Paint: A feature-packed art program with fast zoom function and amazing flexibility [Available soon]



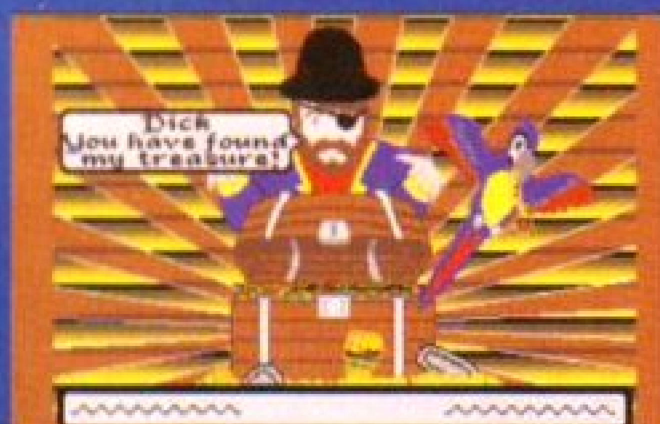
Mouthtrap: Super-fast and super-playable arcade-style game with cleverly animated cute graphics [Available soon]



Reversi: A stunningly presented Public Domain version of the classic Othello game with smoothly rotating counters.



Jukebox: Plays a selection of music files with colourful, animated Vu-meters and spiralling logo [Public Domain]



Treasure Search: A Public Domain educational coordinates game for over 5s with amusing digitised speech.



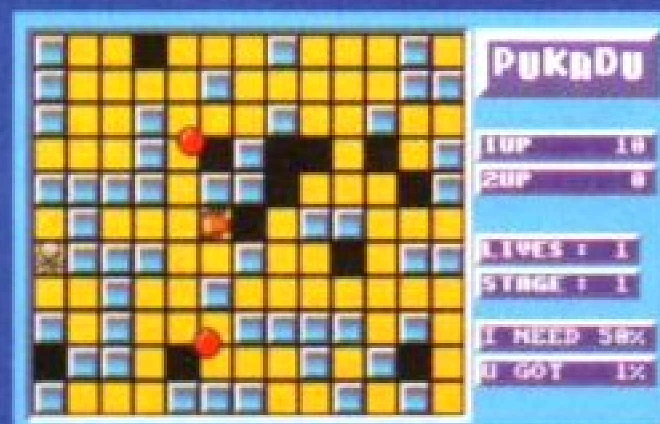
SkateTribe: Super-fast vertically scrolling skate game with bags of playability and captivating music [Available soon]



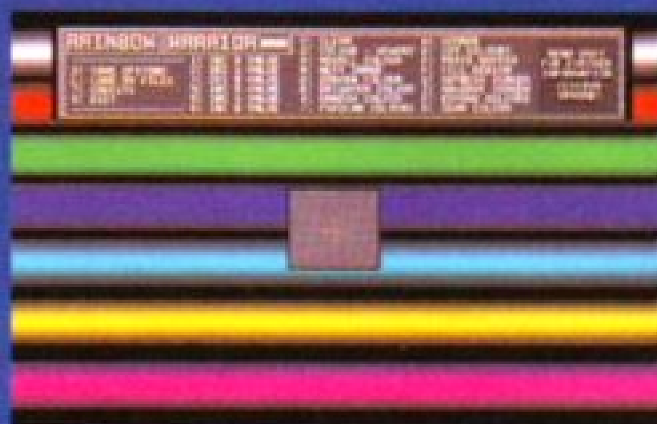
Arcadia: Breakout at its best – with a colourful copper list backdrop and a built-in level designer [Public Domain].



Xerxes' Revenge: Adrenalin-pounding, fast-action horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up game [Now free with AMOS]



Pukadu: Cute arcade-style strategy game with that professional touch to keep you playing [Shareware]



Rainbow Warrior: A very impressive editor which enables you to create copper list backdrops [Public Domain]



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With UK sales racing past the 25,000 mark since its launch in June, **AMOS – The Creator** has to be the biggest-selling non-game package ever for the Amiga.

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Christmas is coming and the shelves are getting packed. As the Software silly season starts, **TRENTON WEBB** checks out the contenders for the fabled Chrimbo number one slot.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

TEENAGE MUTANT HERO TURTLES

■ *Mirrorsoft: ETA Mid-November*



Radical dude! The heroes in a half shell are finally set for their Amiga debut. Splinter, Shredder, Donny, Mickey, Leo and Raff will be crawling around a sewer near you this Christmas. The screenshot shows part of the horizontally-scrolling sewer section, where the green team battle the forces of Shredder in a beat-em-up. There's also an overhead *Gauntlet*-style street section. With everyone going crazy over the little guys it should be one of the hottest licence games ever! Excellent, wicked, cowabunga, bossanova... bossanova?

STRIDER II

■ *US Gold: ETA Mid-November*



Strider is on the comeback trail. *Strider I* scored a Format Gold first time around with his platform-leaping, sword-slashing, Ruskie-bashing antics. In *Strider II* the man plays a similar role but this time it's a head-to-head battle with a band of alien kidnappers. There are five massive levels, but this time Strider has some major league extras up his armoured sleeve. In addition to his sword, Strider II has a gyro-laser gun and can transform into a robot when fighting the end-of-level guardians.



ROBOCOP II

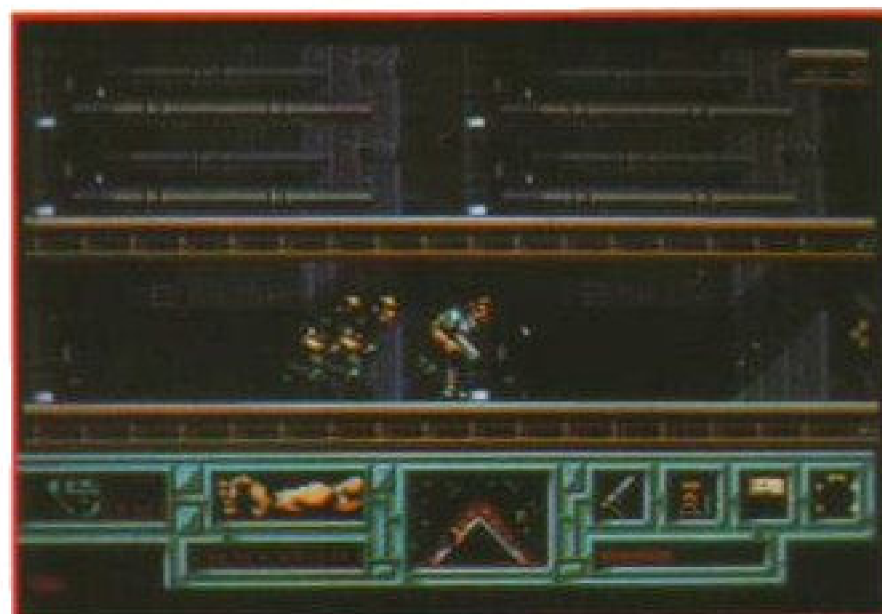
■ *Ocean: ETA Late November*

Metal Murphy's back for one of the year's biggest releases, *Robocop II*. In an eight-level arcade spectacular, the future of law enforcement is once again trying to clean up Old Detroit. Robocop must battle through shoot-outs and solve puzzle sections as he tries to catch Cain – the Detroit drug lord.

OCP are still as corrupt as ever, so Robocop not only has to catch criminals but also destroy an evil Mark II version of himself! Four futuristic weapons, armour power-ups, multi-directional scrolling and bigger sprites will all combine to help *Robocop II* shoot for the top slot this Christmas.

TOTAL RECALL

■ *Ocean: ETA Late November*



When Quaid (Arnie) discovers that his mind has been wiped, he nips on the first shuttle to Mars and turns nasty. In a bloodthirsty sci-fi arcade adventure you must help the big man get his memory back and unravel an interplanetary conspiracy into the bargain. All 200 screens will have cinematic presentation with digitised and comic book graphics, plus a menacing soundtrack written by David 'Beast' Whittaker.

SPINDIZZY II

■ *Activision: ETA November*



Activision have caught sequel fever as well and are set to send *Spindizzy II* whirling onto the small screen. The classic 8-bit game has been updated and revamped to make it even better than the original. A spinning top has to be guided around a 3D isometric world, hitting switches, leaping gaps and solving puzzles. The 8-bit *Spindizzy* had gameplay by the ton, so hopes are high for the Amiga version.

EPIC

■ *Ocean: ETA December*

Somewhere in the depths of space a refugee caravan runs for its life. Taking on the role of fighter pilot you have to protect this rag-tag bunch of star ships from preying raiders. The need for fuel and security forces requires you to fly missions at treetop level, attacking vast installations in strafing and bombing runs.



DEATH TRAP

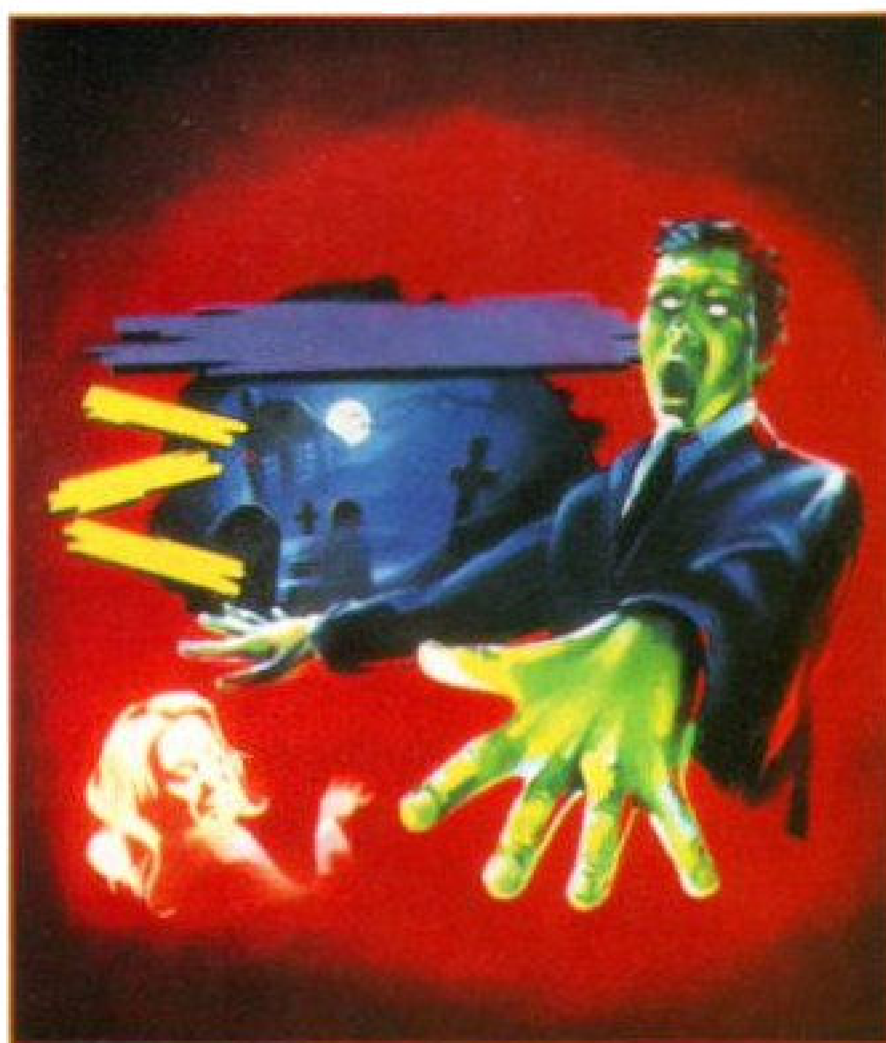
■ ***Anco: ETA Early November***



There's a mad, bad wizard living in the castle at the end of the street. A man so mad that he's stolen all the treasure in the land, hidden it in his fortress and turned the whole place into a *Death Trap*. The challenge is to get the cash and live. As you leap around platforms the aim is to collect spell components that supply the right powers at the right time. In a feudal Japanese-style world you have to beat up goblins, ghosts and all manner of garish nasties armed only with a rice flail.

HORROR ZOMBIES FROM THE CRYPT

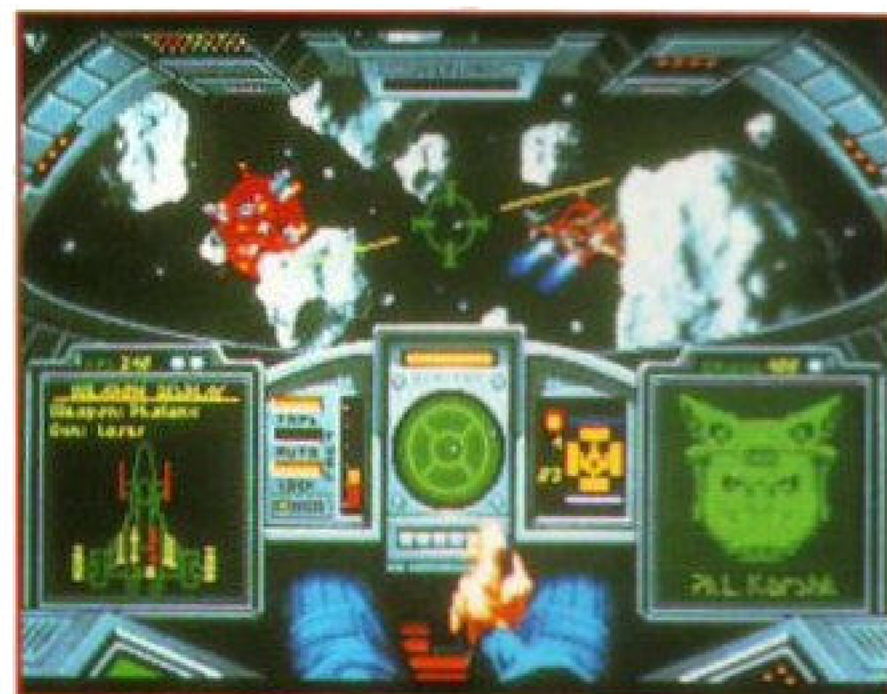
■ ***Millennium: ETA Early December***



Duff horror movies have a certain charm, with silly plots, badly made-up monsters and wobbly cardboard space ships. This B movie magic is captured in *Horror Zombies from The Crypt*, the big Christmas hitter from Millennium. Count Valdemar's family crypt has been disturbed and the dead have risen. In this arcade adventure he must fight through the house, out on the roof and eventually into the crypt to help his ancestors rest in peace again.

WING COMMANDER

■ ***Mindscape: ETA Late December***



The only good Kilrathi is a dead Kilrathi! This alien race have been mankind's foe for 20 years in *Wing Commander*, a 3D space combat simulation designed by Origin Systems. Running as an interactive movie this is an into-the-screen shoot-out with lots more besides. Commanding all the pilots of a wing, as well as your own craft, 30 different missions must be completed if the Kilrathi Empire is to be defeated. Whether or not the Kilrathis deserve this treatment ain't your problem!

PANZA KICK BOXING

■ ***US Gold: ETA Early '91***



The French aren't famous for churning out boxing stars, but they have been rather excellent at Kick Boxing. Andre Panza is their all time hero and is the focus for this game of training, practising and fighting. There are masses of realistic attacking and defensive moves, which use nearly 600 frames of animation.

WIN A BILLION

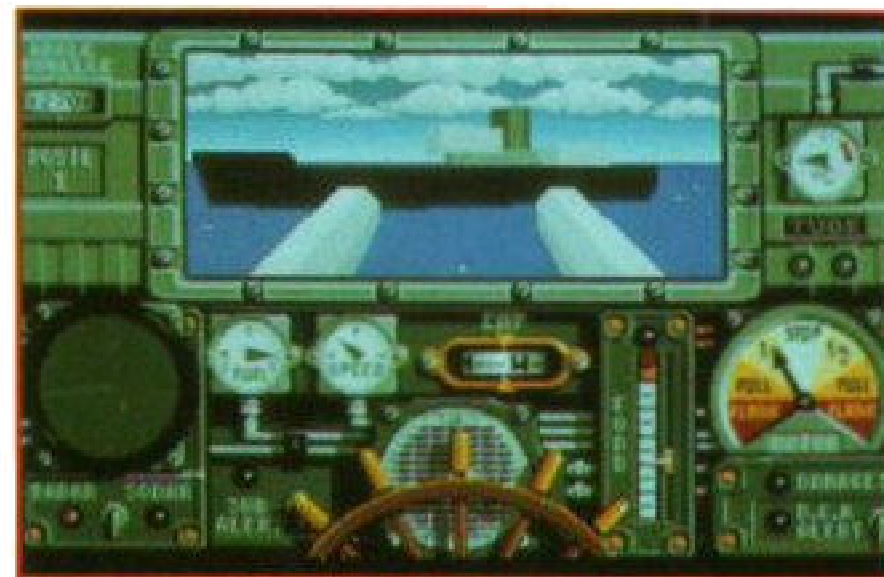
■ ***Impressions: ETA Late November***



This is TV *Trivial Pursuit* played for keeps. Eddy 'we've got ourselves a winner' Klutz is the host of this computer based game show, where the prizes are major league. Do well and you could win a small European country (like the UK for instance) just by answering questions on music, film, sport, science, history, travel, TV, animals and pot luck. Unfortunately you don't get to keep your prizes!

ADVANCED DESTROYER SIMULATOR

■ ***US Gold: ETA January '91***



Advanced Destroyer Simulator comes from the people who brought us *Sherman M4*. Having exhausted the possibilities for land-based armour they have turned their attention to the great sea battles of World War II. As Captain of an advanced destroyer you will have to fight through 15 different missions, each of which recreates a historical naval engagement.

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SOCCER

■ ***Elite: ETA December***



Like *Tournament Golf* below, this is another release in the Sega conversion deal for Elite. It claims to be one of the most realistic simulations ever of the great game, an aim that led them to ignore the obvious World Cup slot for release because it just wasn't ready. They've been waiting since then, to make sure all the extras they wanted were included, putting the final touches to a package that Elite feel should outscore all comers.

DEUTEROS (THE NEXT MILLENNIUM)

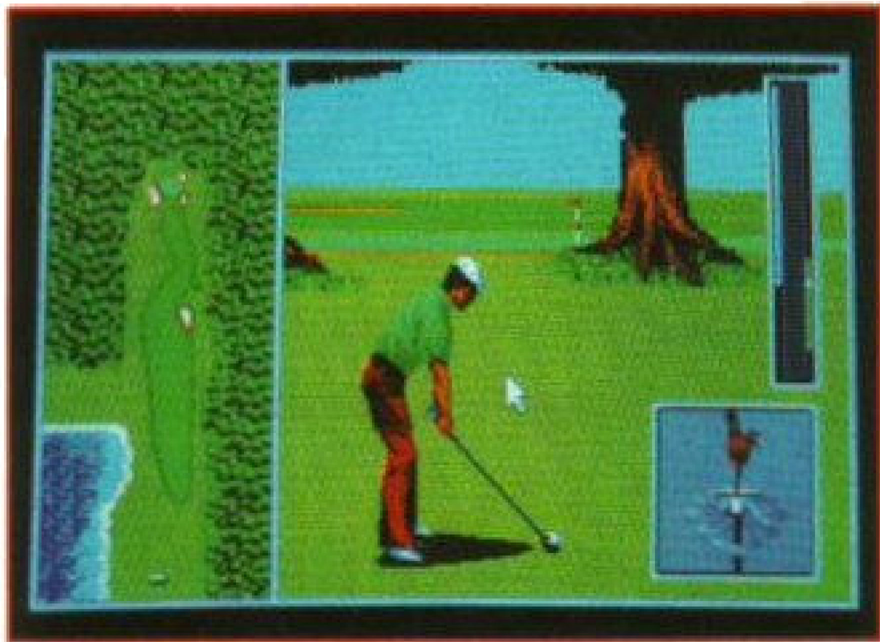
■ ***Activision: ETA December***



Remember *Millennium 2.2*, the classic space colony game? The only problem with it was that it was too small: you'd just got going and it was over. That criticism can't be levelled at its successor *Deuteros*, which is huger than huge. The challenge is to build a network of industrial space stations which will allow you to colonise the entire solar system, and beyond. With animated graphic scenes, stunning sound and big ambitions it looks like it's heading for the stars.

TOURNAMENT GOLF

■ *Elite: ETA November*



Elite look set to record a good round with this Golf conversion from the Sega Megadrive. Not only a good looker, if it plays as well as the console original, it should be up there challenging the *Leaderboards* of this world.

SCI

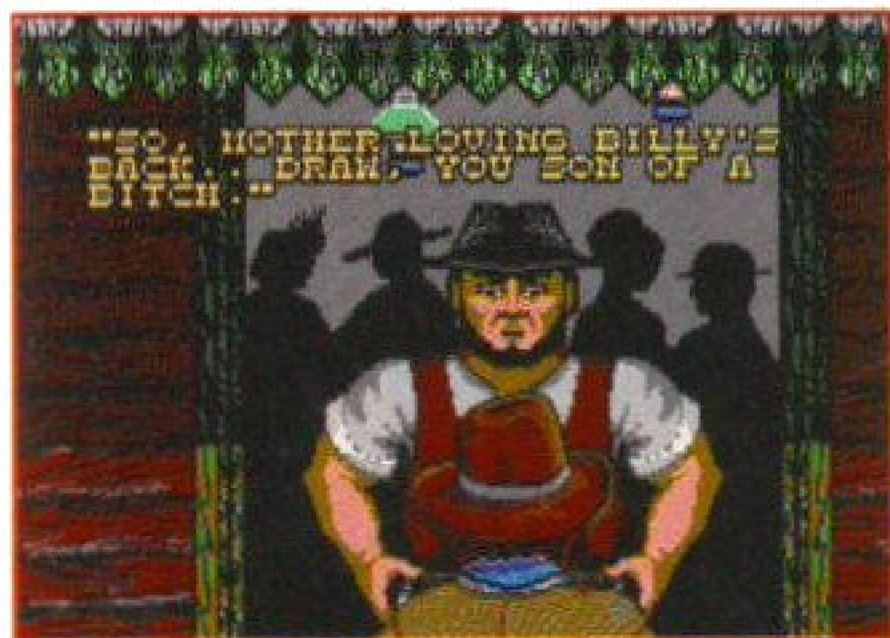
■ *Ocean: ETA November*



Son of *Chase HQ*, *SCI* stands for *Special Criminal Investigation*. Similar to *Chase* in plot, *SCI* lets you have guns to help stop the criminals. As the car races along the highway, a revolver-packing passenger can blast annoyingly slow civilians out of the way. While to get the specific bad guy on each level, friendly helicopters drop high-power bazookas which do even more damage than ramming them in turbo mode!

BILLY THE KID

■ *Ocean: ETA November*



When the West was wild there was one name that struck terror into all law-abiding citizens: Billy the Kid. Now in a Level 9 multi-scene arcade outing you can take part in computing's first Western adventure. Players can take on the guise of either Billy himself or Pat Garret, the ex-friend turned Sheriff. Both characters love the same woman and only one will walk away from the final showdown. It's high noon soon for Billy and Pat.

S.T.U.N. RUNNER ■ *Domark ETA = November*



Futuristic high-speed racing in a pipe is the best way to describe *STUN Runner*. Driving a bob-sleigh style ship down a twisting tube you can roll through 360 degrees in a deperate bid to maintain maximum speed, shoot bonus point targets and collect the stunning speed ups. These boost pads hurl drivers down the pipe at insane speeds, which give the game some maniacally fast moments. If it can emulate the arcade to any degree, Domark should have a major hit on their hands.

CAR-VUP

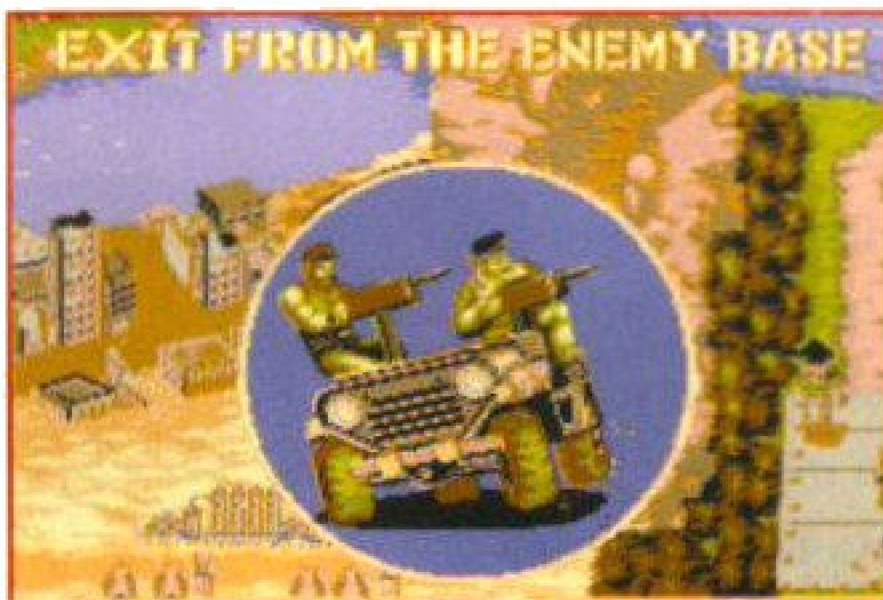
■ *Core Design: ETA November/December*



Not an M25 simulator, but a cutesy platform game that will have drivers reaching for the brakes. They have to drive along platforms in a *Speed Buggy* (anyone remember *Speed Buggy*?) style of car. Every inch of each level has to be driven over, which is none too easy as you're being chased by aliens and monsters of all shapes and sizes, while mysterious power-ups drop from the sky. Okay, so maybe it is an M25 simulator!

LINE OF FIRE

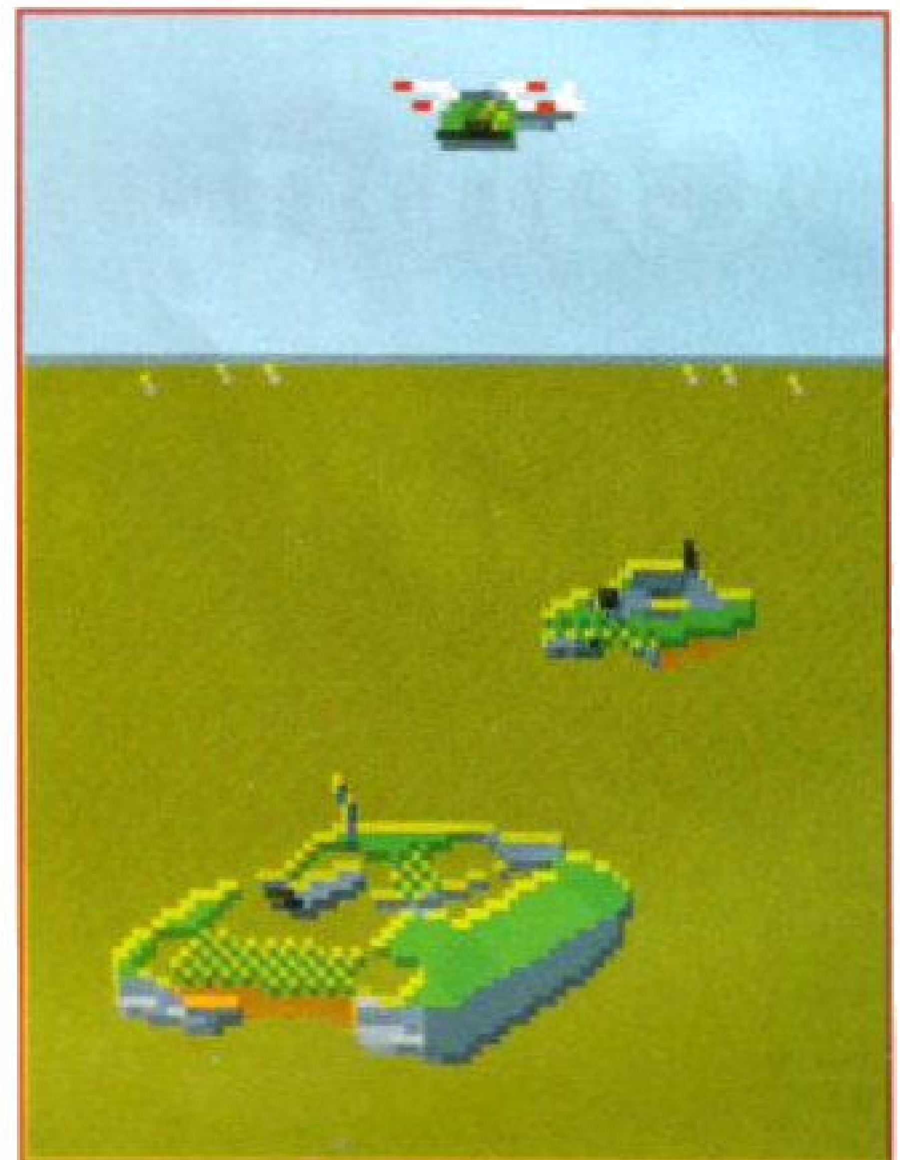
■ *US Gold: ETA Late November*



Where *Operation Wolf* went only *Operation Thunderbolt* dared follow. Now US Gold bring on the game that made both of these fabled arcades look like wimps. *Line Of Fire* is a floating, rotating, no holds barred shoot-em-up with a strong coin-op pedigree. As part of a two man team, players have the chance of shooting their way around a map in a killing frenzy. Lock and load, you're in the Line of Fire.

BATTLE COMMAND

■ *Ocean: ETA November*



'Tanks' to Ocean this Christmas could be one of the most destructive ever. *Battle Command* tells the tale of a space-age super tank that has the dubious honour of taking on the enemy alone. Armed to the tracks with cluster bombs, missiles and cannon, the tank must complete espionage missions, blast helicopters out of the sky and win countless slugging matches with other armour. As a strategy shoot-out it plays brilliantly in demo form. The full review will follow next month.

BATTLESTORM ■ *Titus: ETA November*

In the year 6997 a lone adventurer has returned to earth to find it has been invaded by four alien races. Flying an Airborne Attacker TROY208, the wanderer decides that the slimey ones must be ousted and that he's the man to do it. That's where you take control, flying the Attacker in the Amiga's first full-screen multi-directional scrolling shoot-em-up.



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History in the Making

What do gladiators, Joan of Arc and Nazi stormtroopers have in common? Answer: they all star in their own historical games. Who writes these games and why? And what would they rather be doing? **KATE DIXON** finds out.

The immortal opinion of motor car manufacturer Henry Ford was that "History is more or less bunk", which probably explains why he became a businessman and not an academic. It also illuminates an important point: history books are forced by their very nature to tell lies. The whole truth isn't always available – there wouldn't be enough room to tell it even if it were – and in any case it would be coloured by the historian's own interpretation of the facts.

There's even more opportunity to tell the odd whopper when you're trying to squeeze world history into 1Mb and a couple of 3.5" disks. So why do the programmers bother? Games are fiction after all, so why pick the Battle Of Britain or Joan of Arc when, for a lot less research, you could choose the strategies of bug-eyed xenomorphs from Mars instead?

For starters you can look to the interactive game that arguably started it all: Cinemaware's revolutionary *Defender Of The Crown*. It was the first time you actually had the chance to redirect the course of history using the now-standard combination of arcade sequences and strategy elements. For Kellyn Beck, its creator, the attraction was romantic: "I've been a history buff all my life. It's escapist entertainment, I guess: the opportunity to be someone you never could be otherwise: a sort of vicarious way to travel".

Level 9, former fantasy adventure creators but now more mainstream programmers, take a more pragmatic approach. "There are lots of mediocre games in the fantasy market and a good game doesn't always show through. Whereas the historical market is a lot smaller, if you do something well there everybody knows about it." The policy seems to be working, since they're currently programming *Billy The Kid* for Ocean and *Champion Of The Raj* for Mirrorsoft.



ABOVE: *Billy the Kid* is expected to be a big success for Ocean, but his 'historical' appeal is less important than the fact that he stars in the film *Young Guns 2*, which is out soon.

Love Thy Subject

So, you've decided you want to program a historical game. Next question: how do you pick your subject? For Matthew Stibbe, designer of *Imperium* and final year History student at Oxford University, it was the love of a particular period. He's currently programming *'Nam 1965-1975*, an in-depth strategy game for Domark which lets you play President Nixon in a re-run of the Vietnam war. His interest in the subject goes right back to his schooldays. *Apocalypse Now* inspired him to write an essay for his English A level exams and he's never looked back.

Level 9's Pete Austin has always had a soft spot for the pomp and colour of the Raj. On the other hand, *Billy The Kid* was chosen on strategic grounds: he's prime game material because a cornucopia of Kid films (especially *Young Guns*) ensures that everybody's heard of him.



THE HIST EXTRA

Hits from the Flicks

Everybody knows a strong cinematic connection is more likely to sell. If the gamesplayer's mind is awash with media coverage of the Battle Of Britain or the latest epic from Paramount, programmers aren't afraid to cash in on it. *Champion Of The Raj* is clearly aiming for the epic style of *A Passage To India* and *Jewel In The Crown*, while Impressions' *Rorke's Drift* exploits the Michael Caine connection by borrowing its rousing soundtrack from that patriotic epic, *Zulu Dawn*.

If you blink once during the chariot scenes in the forthcoming *Centurion: Defender Of Rome*, you could easily mistake it for *Ben Hur*. Even *'Nam*, though it was designed to be a much more serious kettle of fish, will gain sales from the knock-on effect of commercial grunt movies like *Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket* and *Hamburger Hill*.

No matter how strong the visual connection, some subjects always make better games than others. Another of Pete Austin's pet characters is Genghis Khan, but he's unlikely ever to make it into pixellated form because he isn't famous enough.

Other events are simply taboo because they're too recent. Imagine the outcry if software houses produced a shoot-em-up based on either the Falklands War or the Invasion of Panama, or an arcade adventure in which you prevented the bomb from being planted on the Pan Am airliner which crashed at Lockerbie. There is also a question of taste with such delicate subjects…

The Taste Factor

Often there's a fine line dividing what's considered acceptable and what's dismissed as bad taste. Vietnam gets the thumbs-up if it's portrayed as a fairly uncontroversial buddy-style arcade game (*Lost Patrol*, *Platoon*) or a flight sim (*Flight Of The Intruder*). Anything more controversial than that and most American publishers are frightened to get their fingers burned.

As Matthew Stibbe comments on selling *'Nam* to software houses: "I spent a lot of time trying to persuade people it was viable, historically objective and thoughtful – but the Americans, perhaps understandably, switched off". He feels that being an Englishman commenting on American affairs didn't help.

It's not just recent events that are sensitive, either. Even a time-gap of 50 years isn't always long enough. If games featuring World War 2 are to be published in Germany, there are clear guidelines which they must follow. Lucasfilm's *Indy (The Adventure)*, Pandora's *Eagle's Nest* and Digital Magic Software's *Colditz* all had to be designated swastika-free zones for the German market. Overt representations of Hitler are also out: a small graphical portrait of the Führer in *Colditz* was only sanctioned because it's ambiguous enough to look like Charlie Chaplin as well.

The Structure

Once you've picked your subject the next problem is deciding what to do with it. At one end of the scale history is purely cosmetic: *Rick Dangerous* is little more than a platform game with big-nosed Egyptians, *I Ludicrus* is just a beat-em-up with gladiators and *Eagle's Nest* is merely a shoot-em-up in jackboots.

In a flight simulation, even the most elaborately-described historical scenario is nothing more than an attractive extra – the complex politics of South Vietnam don't really interfere with the action. Clearly, the main advantage of using a real historical context here is that it gives old genres a more saleable exotic twist.

At the more intellectual extreme, detailed scenarios are the thinking gamesplayer's dream: just look at strategy games like *'Nam*, serious wargames in the style of *UMS II* and Cinemaware-style epics like *Lords Of The Rising Sun*. In between comes a wealth of arcade adventures and semi-strategic products like Microprose's *Pirates* or Ocean's *Lost Patrol* and *Ivanhoe*, where the historical context is less important to the central aims of the game.

Despite its selling potential, as far as Matthew Stibbe is concerned the cinematic approach was definitely wrong for *'Nam*. "I'm not all that interested in individuals' experiences. What I am interested in is an overall historical



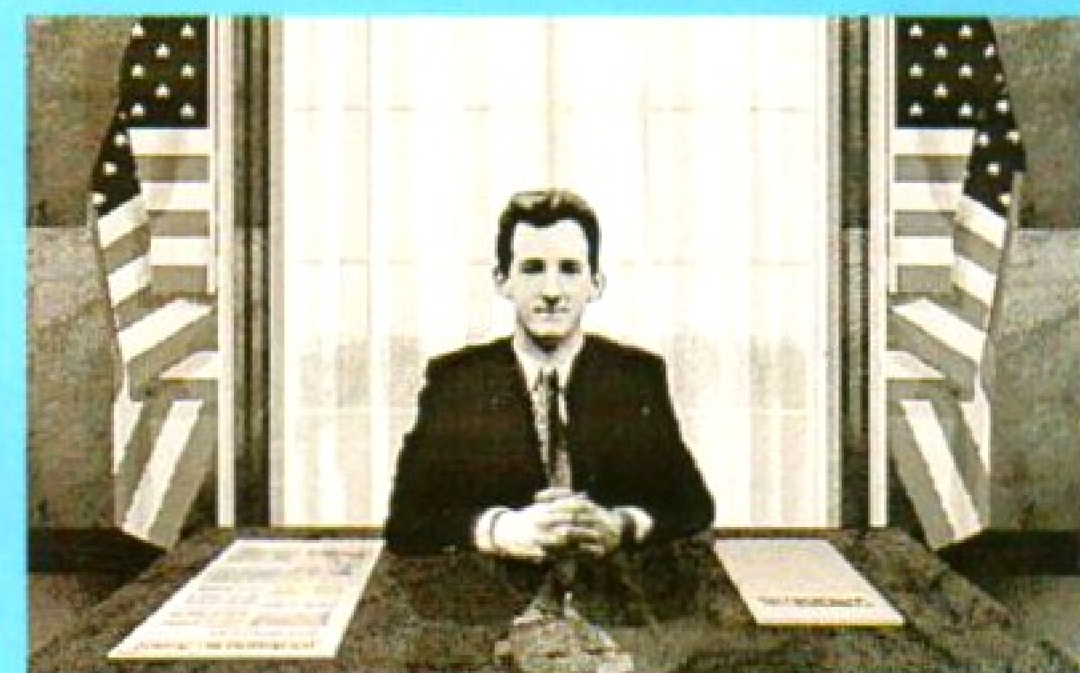
LEFT: There is a thin line between real and fictional history. Ivanhoe was the invention of Sir Walter Scott, not a real-life character.

MATTHEW STIBBE

Portfolio: ***Imperium, 'Nam 1965-1975.***
Would most like to have met:
Winston Churchill – a real hero. Actually, I'd like to have a Victorian visit me so that I could test his reaction to modern civilisation.
Would most like to have visited:
Victorian Britain.
Would most like to have been:
A Victorian philanthropist like Disraeli, Peel or Lord Liverpool. I could have done lots of good deeds.



Political realism is promised by *'Nam 1965-75.*



Matthew Stibbe, fulfilling a digital dream...

“ I can tell you what I wouldn't do. I wouldn't go wild on detail and put a variable in for every single thing in the world. That would be a frustratingly slow alternative creation, not a game. I think I'd do something that wasn't too cinematic, something strategic and high level with plenty of double-clicking on several layers of text and lots of hypertext. If it was a wargame, I'd put in every single army division and lashings of detail. I'm really interested in 'permaculture' – simulating small economies or environments, something like predators in hedgerows. I'm not sure I'd want rendered high speed graphics. I still think you can design a really good game on a VIC 20 [Pictured left]. ”



ULTIMATE ORICAL VAGANZA

"What kind of a game would you like to produce if you had an imaginary supercomputer which put unlimited visual and memory potential at your disposal?" That's the question we put to four top programmer history buffs. Here's what they said.

JON LAW



Jon Law's creation, *Colditz*.

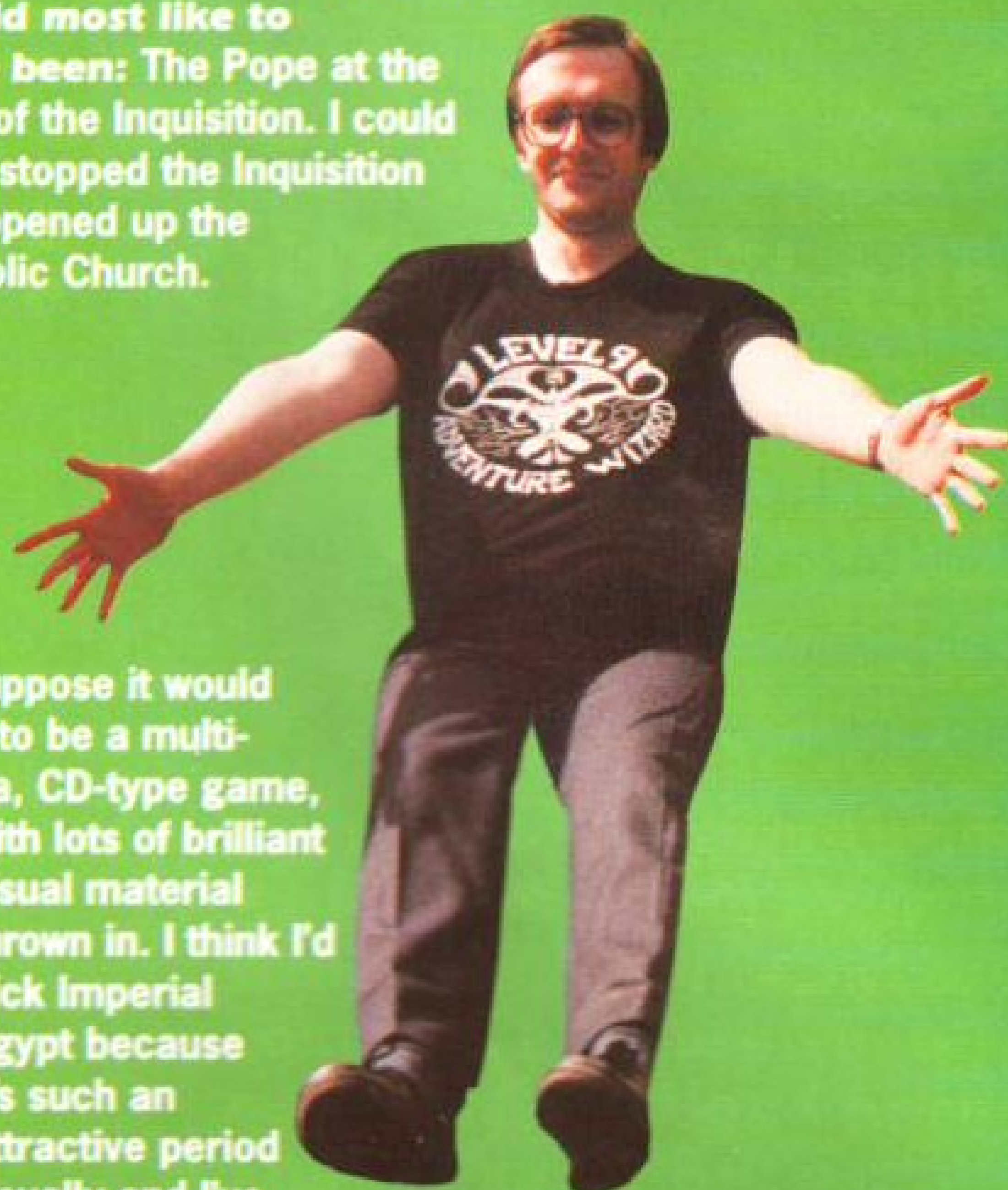


Portfolio: *Colditz*.
Would most like to have met: King Arthur, to see if he really did exist.
Would most like to have visited: Arthurian Britain.
Would most like to have been: Himself.

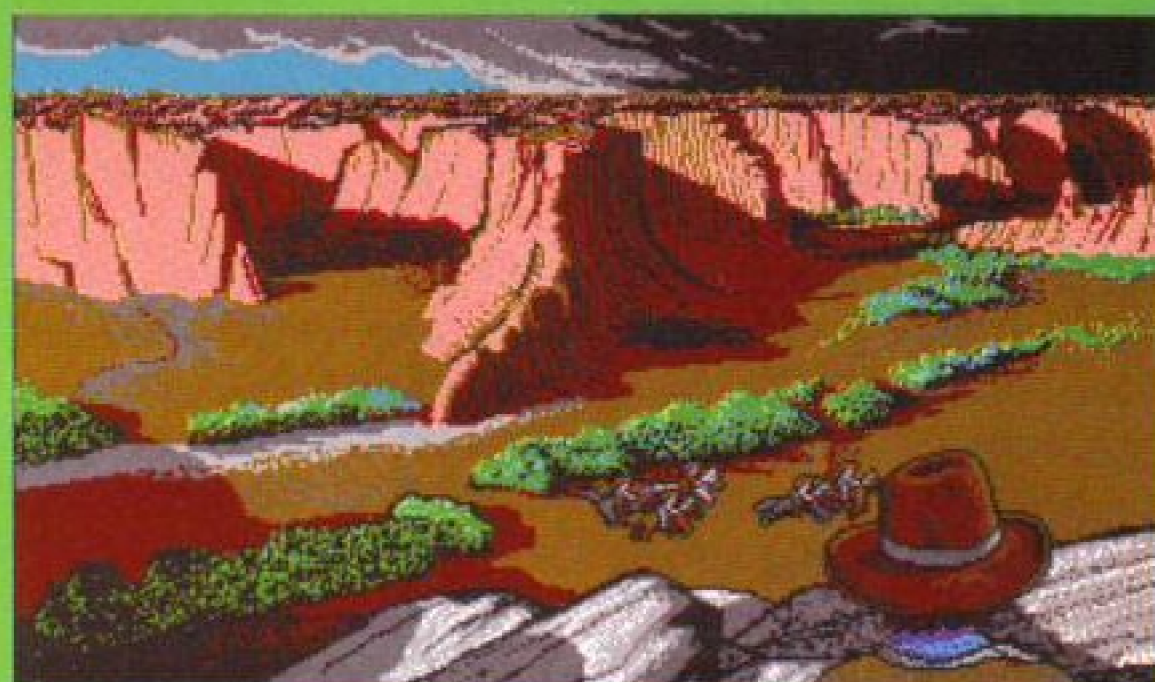
" Something about King Arthur – either that or a time machine game which allowed you to visit any place in history you could possibly desire. That way you could also travel into the future and find out what happens to you. There'd be no restrictions on a game like that. "

PETE AUSTIN

Portfolio: *Billy The Kid, Time And Magik, Champion Of The Raj*
Would most like to have met: Marco Polo – a most interesting person.
Would most like to have visited: Imperial Russia as a member of the aristocracy. Aside from the moral implications of the kind of life they led, they probably had the best time.
Would most like to have been: The Pope at the time of the Inquisition. I could have stopped the Inquisition and opened up the Catholic Church.



" I suppose it would have to be a multi-media, CD-type game, with lots of brilliant visual material thrown in. I think I'd pick Imperial Egypt because it's such an attractive period visually and I've already started planning a game about it. "

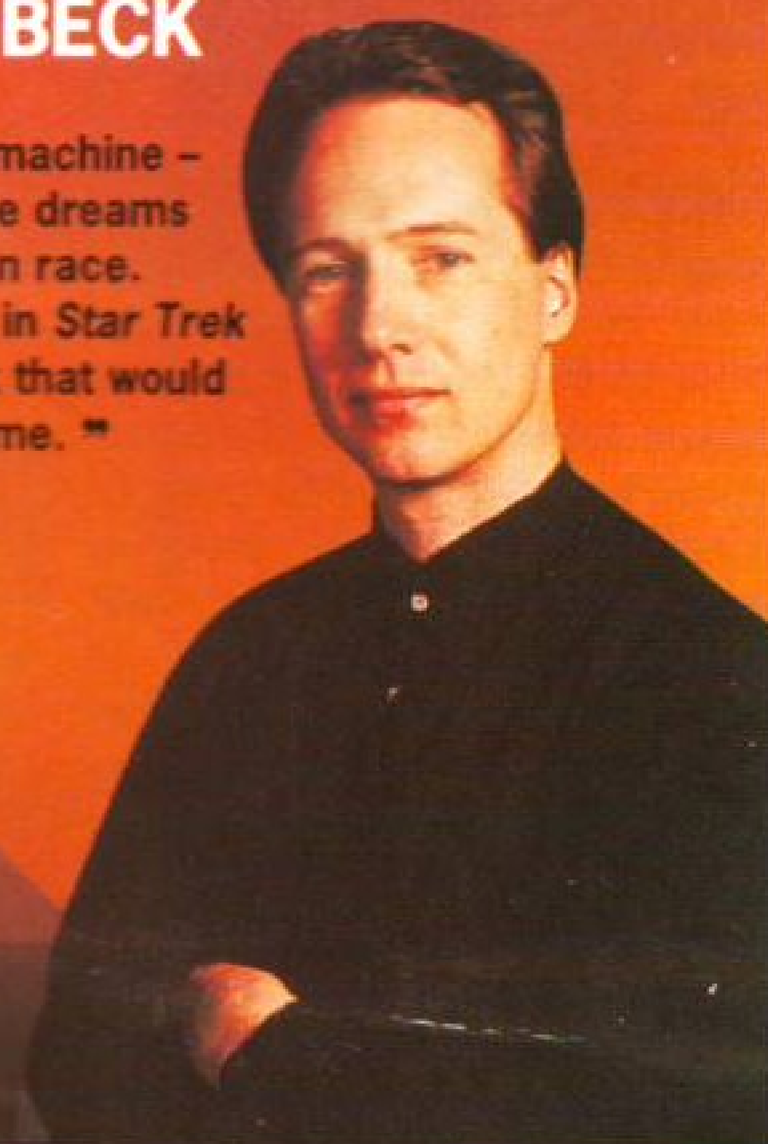


Starring the wildest son-of-a-gun in the West, *Billy the Kid*.

KELLYN BECK

Portfolio: *Defender Of The Crown, Centurion, Defender Of Rome* (to be released on the Amiga early next year), *Rocket Ranger*.
Would most like to have met: Mark Twain.
Would most like to have visited: Ancient Egypt, to see what the Pharaohs were really like, though I'd like to come back: civilisation is nice.
Would most like to have been: Cicero – a brilliant man and a historian too.

" It would have to be a time machine – something which captured the dreams and fascinations of the human race. It would be like the holodeck in *Star Trek The Next Generation* – I think that would be the ultimate computer game. "





analysis which takes account of the various layers of context which affect any situation." The result is quite naturally a strategy game.

For Kellyn Beck, on the other hand, visuals are essential. "A game is an integral package and all interactivity is important. If you pick something with a strong visual impact it's bound to be a lot more entertaining." In games with arcade sequences it is the action, such as the chariot racing of *Centurion*, tiger hunting in *Champion Of The Raj* or jousting in *Defender Of The Crown*, that provides the period flavour, but strategy provides the meat. The only aspect they lack is the kind of in-depth analysis that a more serious product can provide.

BELOW: Fast, frantic action is, let's face it, important to games: so the chariot racing of *Ben Hur* is an ideal scene to convert.



The Creative Process

Making fact fit fiction takes time. The first stage in the process usually revolves around months of research. Even though *Colditz* was a board-game conversion and the basic framework was already fixed, designer Jon Law still had a lot of bedtime reading to wade through. Books and photographs were the only factual sources of visual information – the rest he drew from the film, *The Colditz Story*. "It was the only way we had of getting the decor right."

Kellyn Beck, a history buff, simply loves research for its own sake. "I love spending days and weeks in the uppermost sections of libraries where nobody ever goes." Rather like the boys from Level 9, who visited a selection of Nevada's reconstructed Wild West towns as part of their research for *Billy The Kid*, Kellyn regards the research phase as a great opportunity to travel. "Even if you don't really need all the detail it gives you a historical overview."

Fact or Fiction?

That's not to say, however, that Kellyn's a stickler for accuracy. "None of my games were intended to be strictly accurate. They capture the flavour of the period and that gives them an authentic feel." In *Centurion*, he's deliberately squeezed a lot of Roman history into one game to enable you to meet Hannibal and Cleopatra in one lifetime: "It's a question of condensing events that took place and boiling them down to create a satisfying game." In many ways the process is no different from that of writing a historical novel or directing a film like *The Untouchables*. Nobody really expects it to be pure, corroborated historical fact.

"Champion of the Raj needed an arch-villain, but historically there wasn't one. Worse still, all the candidates were from mainstream religions and therefore taboo. The result: Thugee is a much bigger menace than it ever was historically"

RIGHT: "Infamy, Infamy, they've all got it in for me!" Kenneth Williams' portrayal of Caesar might not have been the inspiration, so maybe Liz Taylor was: Cleopatra's Egypt remains a favourite theme for the programmers' ideal game.

HISTORICAL GAMES THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

They were giants, great players in the development of the modern world, epic shapers of mankind's history, but somehow they never won the very highest accolade: nobody thought to transform them into a game. Here are five historical games that never were but might have been.

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS?

A rollicking roller-coaster of a Renaissance romp in which Columbus negotiates for his ships, flirts with the Spanish queen and negotiates for gold and supplies with the New World's natives.

PLATO

Before he drank the fateful hemlock Socrates entrusted his best buddy Plato with the secret of his life's work; a philosophical argument which explains the meaning of life. In epic arcade adventure style, dodging soldiers and long-winded philosophy students, equipped only with the sharpest of non sequiturs, Plato scours the Athenian underworld for the immortal secret.

GUY FAWKES SIMULATOR

In CodeMasters' latest budget game, you play dastardly Guy, enemy of Britain and future democracy, as he sneaks through the corridors of the Houses Of Parliament avoiding MPs and planting bombs. Will he change the course of history on November 5th?

HUN!

Step into the shoes of the most feared man in 5th Century Europe – Attila the Hun. Start in Siberia, large axe in hand, and attempt to emulate the warrior-diplomat's rise to power as he battles with barbarians and Romans and levies taxes on pain of death.

NOBODY EXPECTS

Take on the responsibilities of the Inquisition by attempting to cast your influence throughout all of Catholic Europe. Gain the confidence of the Pope and position royal confessors very carefully. Atmospheric arcade sequences feature applying the thumb screws, public burning and a DIY rack.

Most programmers agree you have to make the odd alteration to turn truth into entertainment. Pete Austin explains why he condensed his history of the unification of India, which actually took a couple of hundred years, into the lifetime of one person: "It helps if you have the same hero all the way through." Austin's also taken a little artistic licence in the interests of structural balance. He needed an arch-villain, but historically there wasn't one. Worse still all the potential candidates were from mainstream religions and therefore taboo. The solution was to overemphasise the role of the Thugs, a minority group of highway robbers that terrorised the countryside, worshipped the goddess Kali and of whom nobody could possibly approve. The result: in *Champion Of The Raj*, Thugee is a much bigger menace than it ever was historically.

DIY History

History is all about fixed events, games are all about simulating choice: so how do you go about combining the two? The pitfalls are obvious: one of the main criticisms levelled at *Defender Of The Crown* was that once you'd sussed the system it was far too easy to win. A couple of sure-fire strategies and you'd control England every time.

Nowadays the top end of the market is a lot more complex. There's usually more than one route to victory and realism is simulated by elements of luck and random events. In *Centurion* a sudden edict from the senate might swallow up half a year's finances and in *Joan Of Arc* you may find yourself unexpectedly forced to fight a duel to the death. The events are random, ensuring that how you fashion history is a question of skill.

Matthew Stibbe thinks the key to a challenging epic is simply laying down the correct parameters. "You only have to



They're History

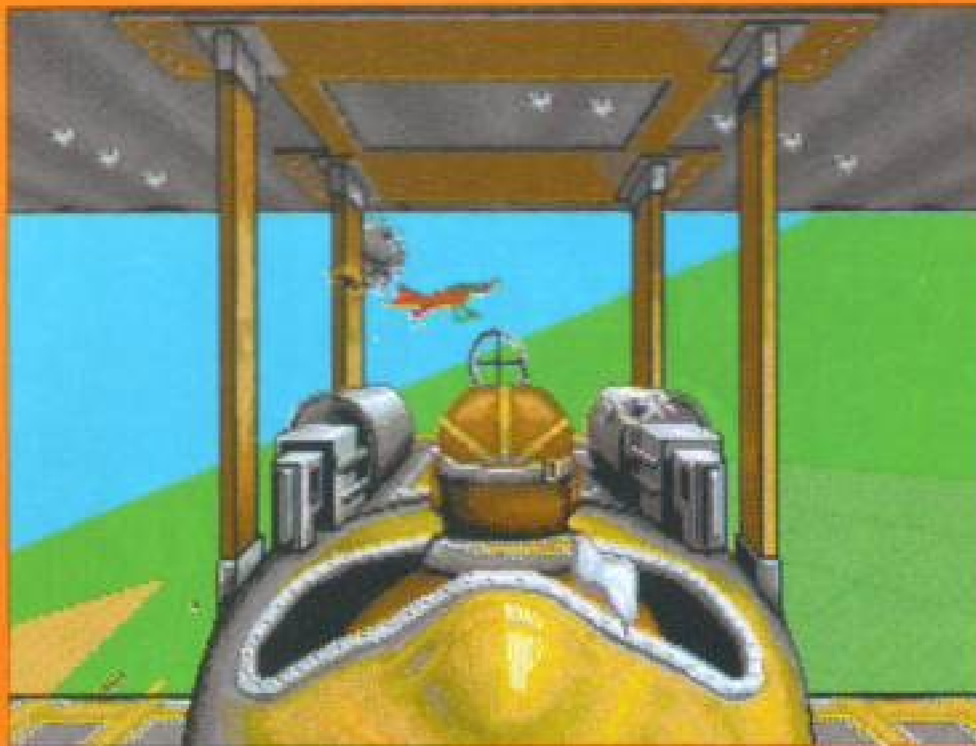




We proudly present ten of the top historical games – the ones you should already have or, if you haven't, you should get hold of. Some are so old that they've never been reviewed in AF and you might even find them on compilations or in a bargain bin somewhere.



LOST PATROL: Graphically one of the most ambitious projects ever conducted by Ocean, this presents the 'Nam war in atmospheric style.



WINGS: Cinemaware's WW1 pilot's game captures perfectly the chummy, amateur feel of the sticks-and-string infancy of air combat.

DEFENDER OF THE CROWN
CINEMAWARE, £29.95

The original historical epic from Cinemaware is a bit dated these days but still worth a look for those gorgeous graphic sequences. Not very accurate historically, but it enjoys marvellous presentation.

JOAN OF ARC
US GOLD, £24.99

A military, economic and religious extravaganza that features plenty of strategy and intrigue along with atmospheric graphics. *Defender of the Crown* with knobs on, basically – and jolly fun too.

LORDS OF THE RISING SUN
CINEMAWARE, £29.99, 84% in *ST/AF* 12

Cinemaware stayed with a sort of mediaeval theme, but moved to the other side of the world for this Japanese tale of feuding warlords. Brilliant graphics again and a bit more gameplay too.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY SIMULATOR
RAINBIRD, £24.95

A military conflict time machine that takes you to several different times and places throughout history. Short on fancy graphics but packed with in-depth gameplay and lasting interest. (Watch out for *UMS II* coming soon.)

LOST PATROL
OCEAN, £24.99, 79% in *AF* 14

Recent history this time, in Vietnam, in a game that certainly doesn't try to romanticise this particular bit of history. Once again it has lots of depth to the gameplay and is delightfully atmospheric.

WATERLOO
PSS, £24.99, 92% in *AF* 3

Just one of a series of military epics from Dr Peter Turcan that are a strategist's dream. These are very accurate and complex reconstructions of battles that allow armchair generals to change history.

PIRATES
MICROPROSE, £24.95, 74% in *AF* 9

Life on the high seas is nicely recreated in this swashbuckling drama. It doesn't portray any particular event in history but it's good at reflecting the time, place and people it features.

BATTLEHAWKS 1942
LUCASFILM, £24.99, 73% in *ST/AF* 12

World War II and this time over to the Pacific where carrier warfare, torpedoes and dive bombing play their part as you replay four major battles. It's strong on historical background too.

THEIR FINEST HOUR
US GOLD, £29.99, 90% in *AF* 11

One of the finest games set during World War II, this flight simulation follow-up to the equally strong *Battlehawks 1942* allows you to represent either side and to engage in some of the most hectic air combat ever seen.

WINGS
CINEMAWARE, £29.99, 79% in AF 16

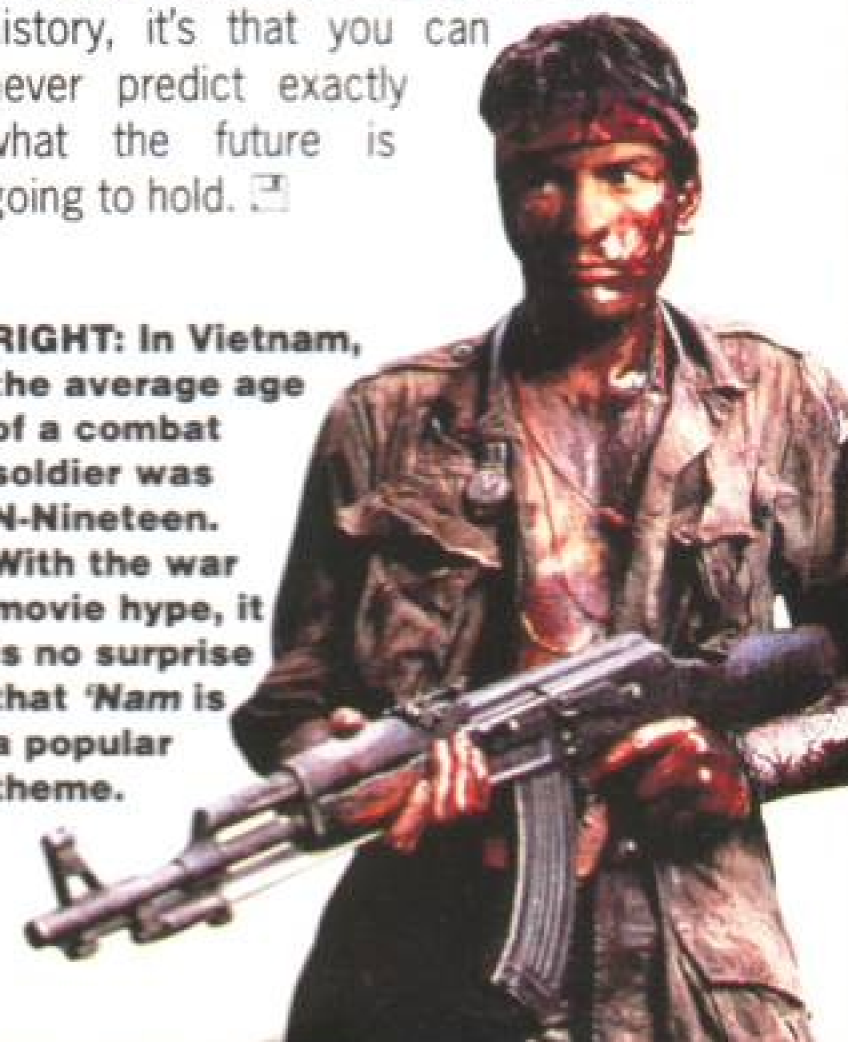
Back to World War I for this, which in Cinemaware's now-characteristic, atmospheric and graphically superb style portrays the role of a fighter pilot. Continues the improvement in gameplay too – there's heaps of it.

program the essence of a historical game" so that you input the elements that would normally lead to a particular event and allow the gamesplayer to alter history by making choices. It's like setting up the correct conditions in a laboratory: it's up to the player exactly what he does with them. Follow a certain course of action and the equivalent of a Tet Offensive may really crop up in 1968. Do something different and it may be postponed, averted or never happen at all.

But even a system like this can have its drawbacks. Pete Austin found that a strategic structure was entirely appropriate for *Champion Of The Raj*. Not so when he came to *Billy The Kid*. "I started out programming a strategic sort of game until it occurred to me that Billy never really made any strategic decisions. Billy the Kid acted on the spur of the moment. The kind of game I was programming expected him to behave a bit like a merchant banker."

So Pete started again. He kept the strategy option but transferred it to Billy's arch-rival Pat Garrett and transformed the Kid's role into a much more spontaneous one. The net result is a two-player game: you can take a methodical approach or dive in with your pistol cocked.

Either way, the best historical games are the ones in which the player, not the program, dictates the outcome of events. If it's merely a matter of making right and wrong choices, if certain events are bound to happen regardless of the course of action that you take, it doesn't bode well for the longevity of a game. Even a limited number of ways of winning leave a lot to be desired, because once you've sussed a couple you'll never pick it up again. If, on the other hand, the plot is dictated primarily by what you decide to do as President Nixon, Joan of Arc or Billy the Kid, then it really can lay claim to the title of historical simulation. If there's anything to be learned from history, it's that you can never predict exactly what the future is going to hold.



RIGHT: In Vietnam, the average age of a combat soldier was N-Nineteen. With the war movie hype, it is no surprise that *'Nam* is a popular theme.

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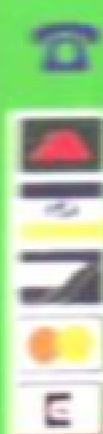
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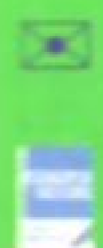
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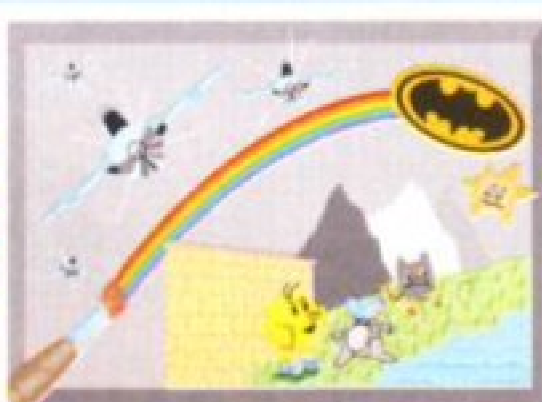
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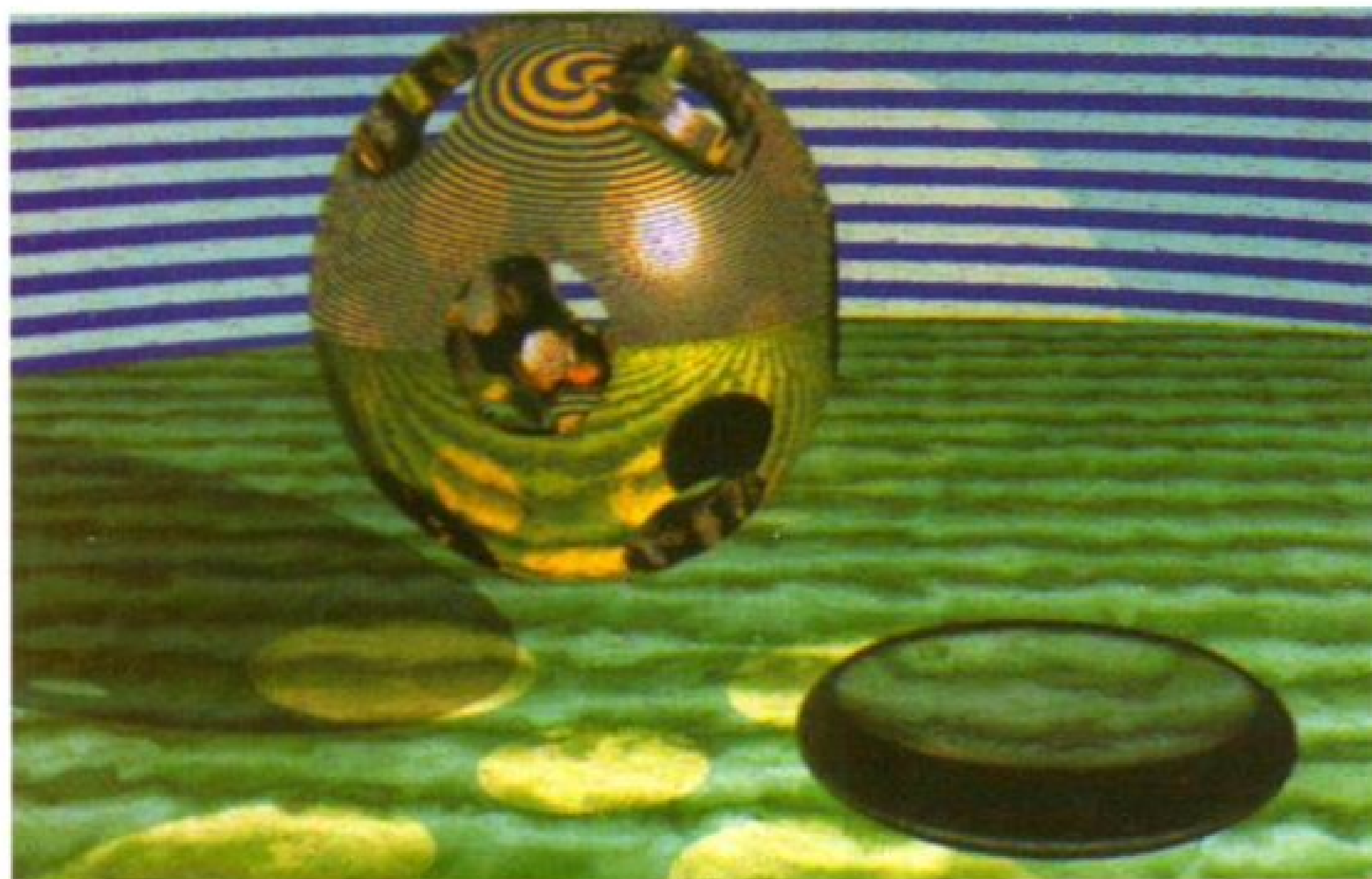
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a m t o 4 p m . . . T H A T ' S T H E M A G I C O F M E R L I N

True Colour is here!

The Harlequin frame buffer will bring True Colour to the Amiga – and it's out soon.



The 24-bit technology that will bring us 16 million colours consists, like most other computer advances, of two separate elements: hardware and software. The software to generate True Colour images is around already and 24-bit paint programs are certainly under development. All that is missing is the display hardware that will allow us to put these colours onto the screen.

"Commodore does not have to produce a 24-bit card – clearly there are many viable alternatives. Third party companies will jump to fill the niche." says Perry Kivolovitz of ASDG. Already several manufacturers are turning these words into a reality.

Leading the way is the Amiga Centre Scotland. The Harlequin frame buffer card was shown in a protoype form with the full support of the Commodore stand at the 1989 Computer Graphics Exhibition (see *Amiga Format* 7). After a year's further development, the board is now nearing completion and its launch to an expectant public will follow at this year's C-GFX.

The images that appear on this page are the most recent to be generated using the Harlequin card. The only problem with looking at them in a magazine like this is that neither the printing processes used by the mag, nor any of the methods used to transfer an image to a form in which we can use it, do the images justice.

The Harlequin display board will cost less than £2000, which is comparatively inexpensive, and is expected to be widely available before the end of the year, which should make it the first card to bring 24-bit True Colour quality to the Amiga.

In actual fact the Harlequin is a 32-bit card, but this does not mean that it uses any extra for the actual image memory. Twenty-four bits is all that will ever be needed for a true-to-life computer display, for reasons outlined in the main feature on these pages. The extra eight bits is used as what is known as an 'alpha channel' to provide other information for special effects on the display, such as masking.

Harlequin will be available in PAL and NTSC versions, provides full broadcast-quality RGB output and, by making full use of interlace, will be compatible with genlocking, so it could soon become a serious power tool in video work.

One of the small problems of 24-bit video is that image files tend to be around one megabyte uncompressed, so you are warned by the ACS that a hard disk would be a sensible part of your True Colour system. Other highly recommended additions include extra memory and a 68030 board with 32-bit memory. Clearly, True Colour is not going to be cheap: but it will push the Amiga up there with the best in the professional graphics market.





Once upon a time, the Amiga's HAM mode with its palette of 4096 colours was the ultimate in colour. Certainly, 4096 colours is not to be sniffed at: but think what you could do with 16 million.

The revolution in colour image systems goes by the name of 24-bit or 'True Colour' display. The way it works is very simple indeed. The colour of each pixel on a screen is defined by a number. This being a computer, the number is naturally in binary. If the number were just a single bit – just one digit in binary – the number could be 1 or 0, on or off, hence just one of two colours. Black or white, say. Add another bit and you have four different choices to represent four colours: add another bit, you can have eight. Then 16, then 32, then 64, then 128, then 256... and so it goes on.

By the time you reach 24 bits you can have 16,777,216 different possible numbers and hence that many colours to choose from. The sheer size of this figure may seem impressive and the potential rapidly begins to seem enormous, but it does kind of beg two questions. Firstly, why do we need it when we have HAM? Secondly, why 24 bits for 16 million colours, not more or less? And finally, how could you possibly use such a large palette?

A Little History

To answer these questions, it's worth bearing in mind that the Amiga does not live in a vacuum and that 24-bit video is not the sole property of the Amiga. The idea of 24-bits-per-pixel colour has been around for a long time: and not just as an idea, either.

The Macintosh and the PC may have started off as weak competitors to the Amiga in the colour field seven years ago, but the professional niches reached by these machines since have persuaded developers to produce 24-bit graphics cards for these machines. The Amiga is now, in fact, in danger of being left behind.

Perry Kivolovitz of ASDG (who are major players in the Amiga graphics world) believes that the competition can be seen off by the Amiga's superior capacities. "For example," he says, "if I were to compare two identical machines – identical in respect to speeds, memory configuration, everything – with exactly the same code, exactly the same assembly language instructions – the Amiga is going to give you a better performance every time. Its operating system allows it not to interrupt itself, not to interrupt the CPU".

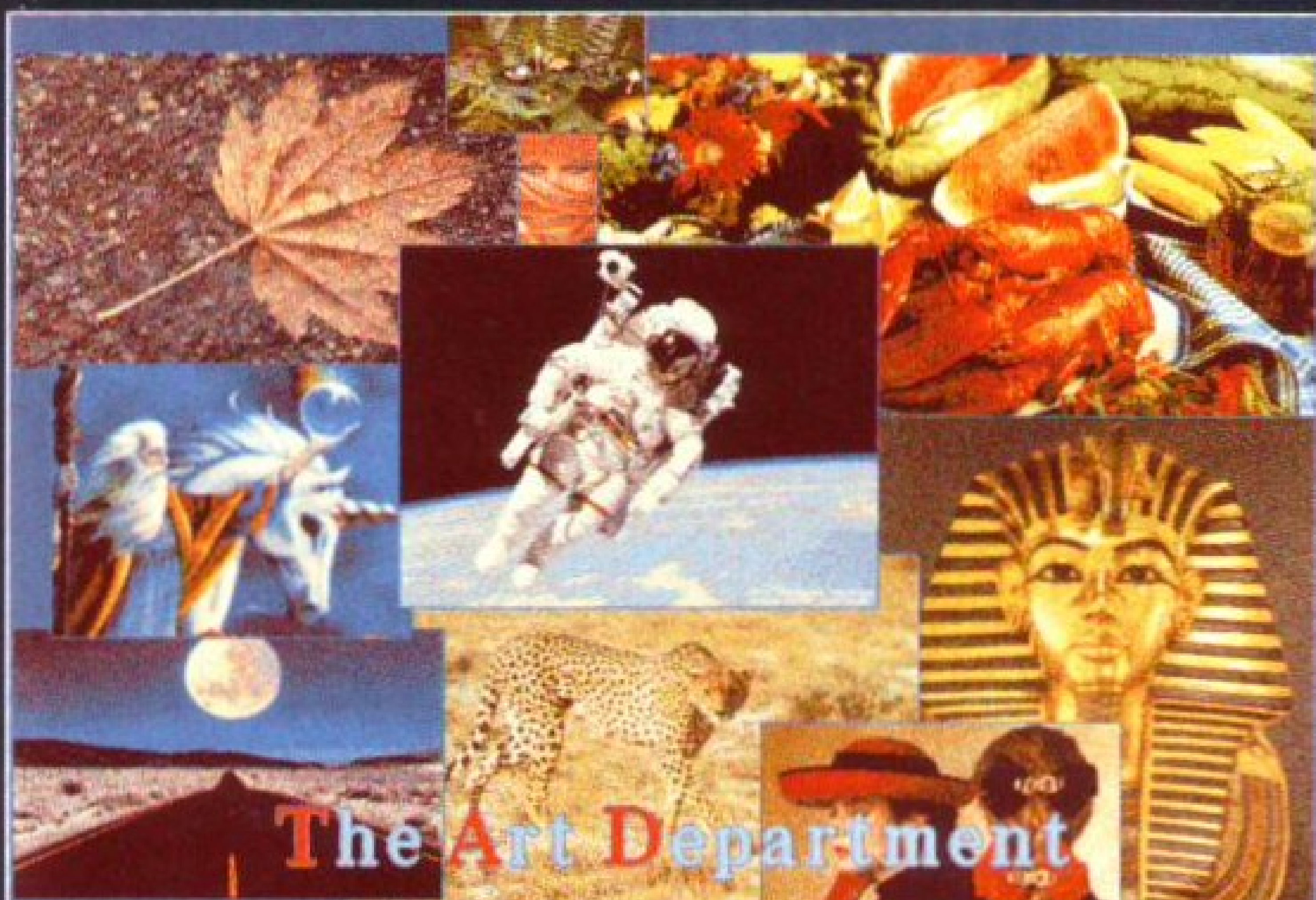
But nevertheless, without 24-bit video the Amiga will not be seen as a serious machine by the professionals. Perry again: "The fact is that 4096 colours, when the pixels are extremely large and at a low resolution, doesn't hold a candle to the perceived quality of a high-resolution 256-colour display". Anyone who has used a colour Macintosh will know exactly what he means.

Dead Meat

HAM really does not cut it any more. Quite apart from the messy, fringed display, its operation is simply too insanely complex. Perry comments: "If you compare the work involved to display a 24-bit image and the work involved to display a good HAM image, you realise that if you have a 24-bit display board, all you do is show the raw data. And if you have that same 24-bit data – the same high resolution, crisp, beautiful colours, beautiful shades – and want to display it on a HAM display on an

All the Colours in the World

The colour revolution is here. 'True Colour' 24-bit video arrives on the Amiga, bringing a choice of 16 million colours. **DAMIEN NOONAN** checks out the future while **BRIAN LARKMAN** takes a look at the first image processing system that will handle 24-bit pictures, The Art Department from ASDG.



Amiga, you have to perform incredible somersaults, incredible gyrations, in order to produce as good a looking image as you can."

HAM still inevitably has its place, especially in animations, where the size of 24-bit files would currently make it impractical for them to be used. But 24-bit is a good deal simpler as well as better – "There's nothing to it!" says Perry – and is certainly the shape of the future.

Colour by Numbers

Sixteen million colours is a palette, not a screen display. A high-resolution monitor only has 64,000 pixels at most, so even if each and every pixel were a different colour, 64,000 is the greatest number of colours you could display at one time. TV and video certainly don't use as many colours as a 24-bit system can provide.



What, then, is the need for 16,777,216 colours? Perry Kivolovitz explains. "If you take a camera and aim it at the countryside, to represent that image you don't need a 24-bit display card. You could probably represent every colour there in 18 bits, 200,000 colours.

"But in order to show, let's say, the shading on a human face, that's a situation where you have a large number of graduations of colours that are basically the same, of the same family, close to each other. If you think about it as having a greyscale shape, going from 0% (white) to 100% (black), then in order to represent all of those shades of grey in between you need eight bits. And eight times three gives you the two to the tewnty-fourth, 24-bit."

Not only is 24-bit impressive, not only is it, in Perry's words, "absolutely necessary", but it is also all you will ever need. It's the ultimate. It is True Colour. "There are 32-bit display boards, but people are often misled into thinking that's 32 bits of image memory. It's really 24 bits of image memory with another eight bits used for other things."

Talking 'Bout My Generation

The 24-bit revolution will involve the two separate technologies of image generation in the software and hardware to display those pictures on an Amiga screen. The hardware for the Amiga to actually display 24-bit images is on its way very soon, but because the idea of 24-bit video has been nascent for a while now, some applications to produce the images are already around.

Seemingly, it would be impossible to paint from scratch an image containing anywhere near 64,000 colours. For this reason, it's mainly image generation programs such as ray-tracing packages and digitisers which, up to now, have been developed to take advantage of 24-bit (or, in some cases, only 21-bit) colour. Programs which are capable of producing images using these colour resolutions include *Sculpt-Animate 4D, Turbo Silver* and the new *Real 3D* in the first category and Professional ScanLab (another ASDG product) and DigiView in the latter.

So you can generate 24-bit images and you can display them. The only problem now is that you can't do anything with them. Until the Amiga is blessed with a range of 24-bit paint programs it will still remain something of an onlooker in the True Colour revolution. Just wait for *Deluxe Paint 24, Photon Paint 24* and *DigiPaint 24*. They are on the way... it's merely a question of time.

The Art Department

Until 24-bit painting arrives, you can at least make use of those 24-bit generated images with this Image processing package. *The Art Department* is the first of what will almost certainly be a flood of True Colour products. It provides a very powerful range of tools, yet they are available from a very simple interface.

The program is described by Perry Kivolovitz of ASDG as "our attempt at defining a new state-of-the-art and entry-level colour image processing system." This preview can only give you a flavour of what the package can do, but over the next few months it will be tested extensively so watch this space for a 10,000-mile report.

LOAD FORMAT allows the incoming data to be converted to the standard 24-bit RGB format used internally by the program. All IFF colour pictures (regardless of the number of colours) are automatically converted to 24-bit data; grey-scale pictures to 8-bit. Other formats such as *Sculpt, Turbo Silver*, TIFF, GIF and even some IBM and Mac, can be converted using modular Loader programs that can be bought separately. (*Sculpt* and *Turbo Silver* RGB Loaders will be provided with the official European version of the *Art Dept.*)

COMMANDS provides the normal Project menu items – Load, Save, About etc – plus Separate, the colour separation requestor. Using *The Art Dept*, ANY picture can be colour separated for use in DTP programs or for full colour reproduction.

The **SCREEN CONTROLS** select all of the standard Amiga screen modes including overscan plus the more exotic A-HAM, Dynamic HAM, A-RES 0&1, and Dynamic Hi-Res: 208 combinations in all! Also selectable here are the standard colour sets – 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 and 4096.

COLOUR CONTROLS allow more precise tuning of the palette and most other aspects of the image via Balance, Dither and Palette buttons. For most artists, this will be the heart of the program because these controls handle the real fine tuning of an image. The Balance button calls a requestor that is similar to the Controls panel of DigiView's companion, *Transfer24*. Sliders control Brightness, Contrast, Red, Green, Blue and Gamma Adjustment. This last 'bends' the brightness so that only the middle range of tones is brightened, maintaining detail in the light and dark areas. This is a great

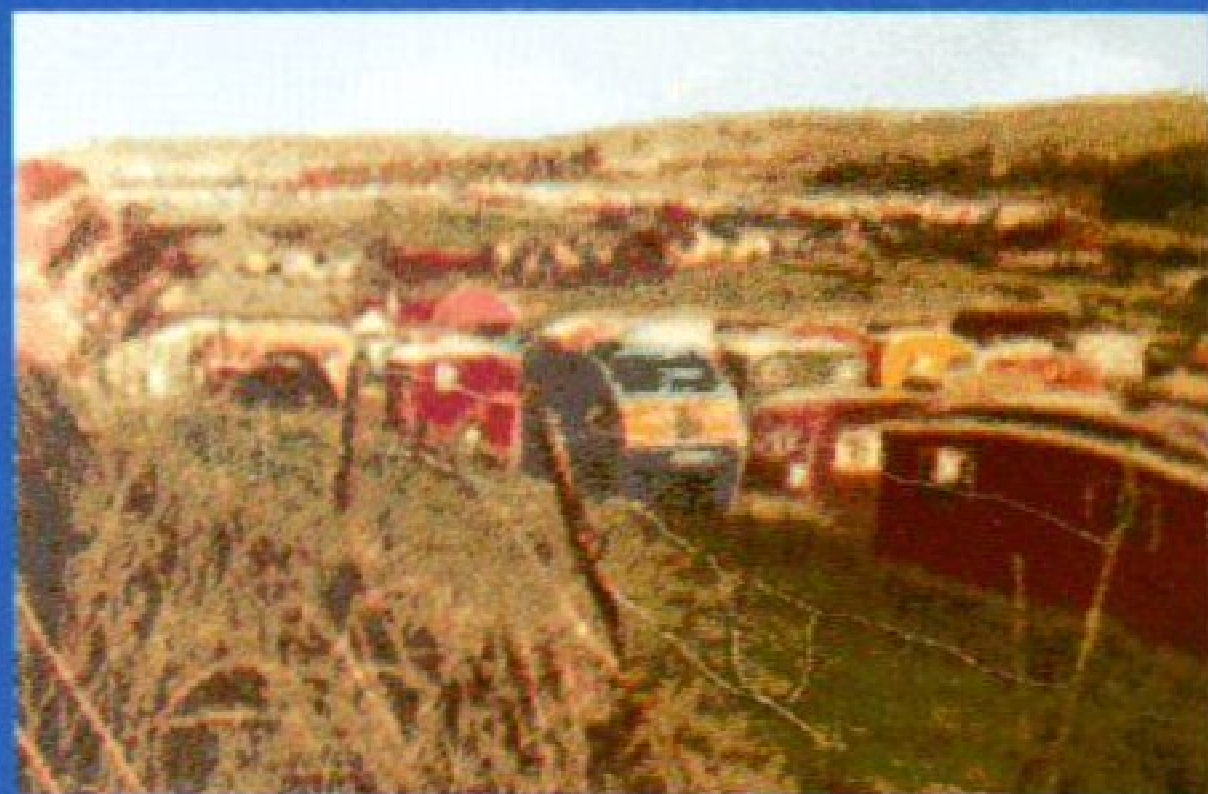
Less colours means smaller files, so for jobs like animation it's best to cut colours. KARL TOROK tests The Art Department's image processing powers.

One of the great pleasures of working with the Amiga is being able to go straight to a HAM paint program and create pictures with 4096 beautiful, delicate shades. HAM also allows realistic shaded objects to be developed in three dimensions – and video digitizers in HAM mode are very effective, bringing almost photographic pictures to the Amiga screen.

But a HAM picture can be more of a hindrance than a help, using up valuable disk space, guzzling chip memory and slowing down animations. If you are involved in animation or 3D modelling, then speed and storage are a key issue. There is a way of getting very impressive results using as little as between four and thirty-two colours... image processing.

Process Colours

***The Art Department* flies ahead of every other image processing program in speed and especially in quality. It has only one real problem: the bare minimum of memory for *The Art Department* is one megabyte, but to perform up to its fullest potential it requires at least four.**



You can create a charcoal drawing effect by starting off with a colour image and turning it into grey-scale. Increase the contrast and decrease the brightness, then choose the line art option. You then retain the 16 colour screen (or decrease the amount of colours used depending on the effect you want) and pick the Floyd-Steinberg dithering, then render the image. The finished image should have a rubbed charcoal-like quality.

You could then, if you had a mind to, combine both the coloured image and the charcoal image in *DigiPaint 3*. It could be possible to superimpose the charcoal image (in varying transparent washes) over the colour image, or vice versa. This can sometimes result in interesting effects.



DO YOU REALLY NEED 16 MILLION COLOURS?

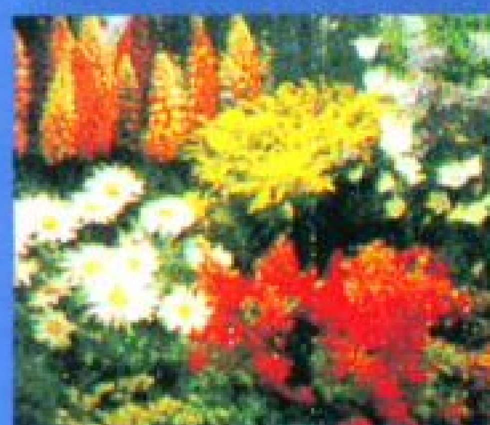
Unlike most other image processing systems, *The Art Department* converts every picture that it operates on into a 24-bit RGB file. You also have the choice of forms of image other than IFF, such as 24-bit files generated by *Caligari* and *Sculpt 3D*, via 'modules' that can be purchased separately if you need them. *Sculpt* and *Turbo Silver* loaders are provided

Process of Elimination

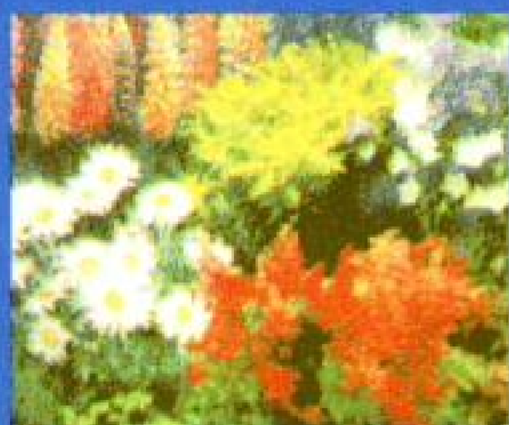
When you have your picture in memory you can do the usual colour adjusting – brightness, contrast and the like – then decide how far you need to reduce the number of colours used in the palette and the resolution of the image.

One thing to keep in mind when image processing is that the program does not always give you the best palette. The results are excellent when there are many different bright colours – but not so good when there is a minimal range of tones. The thing to do then is to force the image.

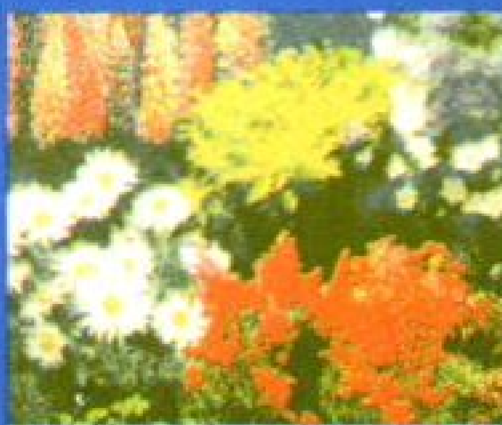
This is done by manually altering certain colours and then observing the results, continually adjusting until the required effect is achieved. If, for example, you suppose that you wish only to render an image into 16 colours from an original palette of 32. You should load in a palette of eight colours from another image, keeping eight colours free to adjust to taste.



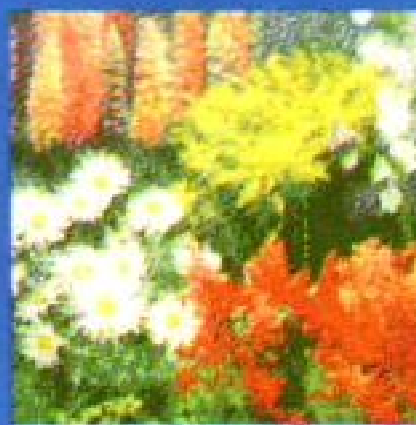
EHB
64 Colours
36K of memory



High Resolution
16 Colours with Jarvis dithering: 84K of memory



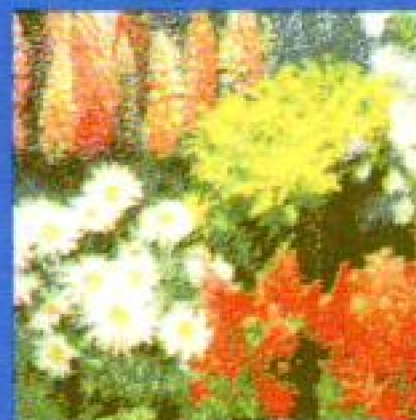
High Resolution
8 Colours with Sierra dithering: 59K of memory



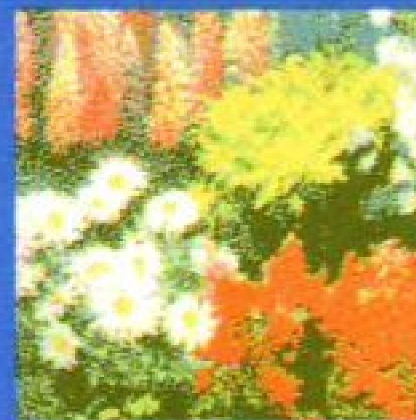
Low Resolution
32 Colours
29K of memory



HAM 4096 Colours
36K of memory



Low Resolution
16 Colours
23K of memory



Low Resolution
8 Colours
16K of memory



Low Resolution
4 Colours: 10K

It is still possible to improve and add interesting effects to your image once you have your palette. There are various dithering effects which can be used with the different types of resolution. The dithering is not too apparent with HAM but very effective with 64 colours downwards – becoming more useful, the less number of colours used.

What happens is that the flat areas of colour are broken up by the various dithering effects available (that is, different types of dot structures). You just simply have to keep trying which effect is the most suitable for the image.

Altered Images

There are other options, like an outline mode which can be very effective when used in conjunction with the 'brightness' control. A colour separation control will also allow you (through a circuitous route) to load in your picture as 24-bit to a PostScript file saved in *ProPage*.

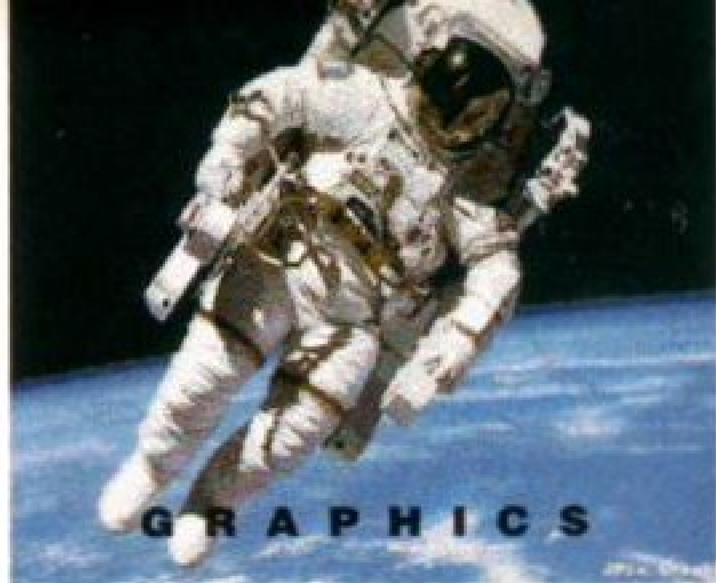
The Art Department also has one of the best scaling routines I have seen. It gives superb enlargements and you can go very large and still obtain excellent reductions. This happens because the program doesn't just replace pixel for pixel: it dithers the shades between the colours.

The control panel is very intuitive in use and you can scale the width and height separately and, if necessary, by percentage, while the program shows you the pixel size of the image. The finished result is brilliant.

Black, White and Grey

Some useful techniques that can be used in *The Art Department*: it is possible, for instance, to turn a low-colour image into a higher resolution grey-scale.

You take an Amiga (IFF) four or eight-colour image and reduce the width and height by 50%, turn it into a grey-scale image and the resulting image will have more than 16 shades of grey – giving the impression that the image is much sharper than if it were in high res (640 x 512 pixels). The results are impressive. ■

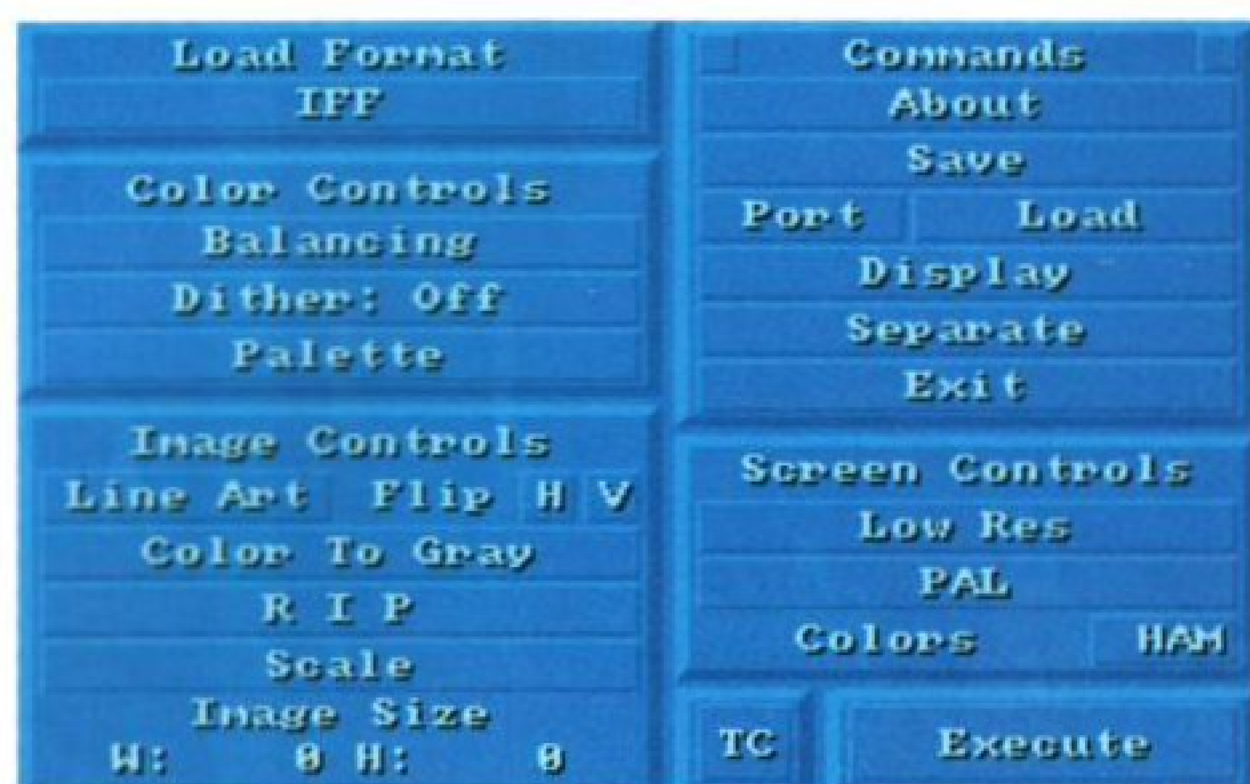


improvement on the standard brightening method. There are no controls for Saturation or Sharpness.

The Dither button selects between no less than six dithering types. Selecting the right dither contributes greatly to getting the best conversion from HAM to the lower palette sizes. As Torok shows in his piece, *The Art Dept* can convert from 4000 to 16 or 8 colours with remarkable fidelity. This is achieved by optically mixing many of the colours, dithering the pixels, and different pictures require different dithers for the best results.

At first sight the Palette controls seem quite ordinary but by including one simple idea – Offset Colour Zero (OCZ) – they become uniquely flexible. The value defined for OCZ is interpreted differently by the system at different times. It can define the position at which a newly-loaded palette will start storing its values. This allows chunks of 4, 8, or 16 colours to be added to a 32-colour palette at any position: extremely valuable to animators and painters alike. When rendering an image with the palette unlocked the value defines where new colours will be added to the palette. Thus the 8 colours used for an animated object can be included into the overall palette of a 32-colour background. Similarly the transparent colour used for genlocking can be excluded from the render, preventing 'holes' in a genlocked image. Many other uses could be found for this tool.

BELOW: The *Art Dept's* interface. Embossed 3D 'switchboard' Workbenches have come very much into vogue recently and *The Art Dept* is no exception providing an attractive range of subdued blue buttons to press. The screen is divided into five main areas: Load Format, Commands, Colour Controls, Image Controls and Screen Controls. Most of the buttons in each area bring up Requestor windows that are themselves control panels. Overall quite an elegant way to control the system but hardly standard Amiga – yet another interface!



The **IMAGE CONTROLS** are the other area of great interest to artists. These allow the image to be flipped, horizontally or vertically, scaled up or down, converted to line art with a sophisticated edge-detection system, and from colour to greyscale. Isolated Pixels can also be Removed with RIP. These tools are all extremely useful, especially the scaling which allows images to be reduced more accurately than any other system and enlarged to the capacity of RAM. Nevertheless, most 24-bit artists will soon be frustrated with the lack of tools to cut and paste, rotate by angle, and apply global special effects like ripple, blur, sharpen, patterned pixelisation etc. A future version would be enhanced if provision were made to apply such effects, perhaps as user-defined modules.

As a first step *The Art Department* is a uniquely flexible and useful piece of software. It is equally valuable to 'normal' Amiga users working in the standard resolutions and palettes, and to 24-bit 'power users'. Yet for this latter group it is only a first step. Looking at the range of 'True Colour' software becoming available for the Mac II, 24-bit Amiga users are soon going to want much more in the way of image processing. When 24-bit cards become widely available, it will not be enough to display, resize and flip pictures, or even to apply special global effects. We will want to paint on them. Which will mean *DigiPaint 24, PhotonPaint 24* and DPaint XXIV...

The Art Department (ASDG) £69.95
Silica Systems 081 309 1111

Real People

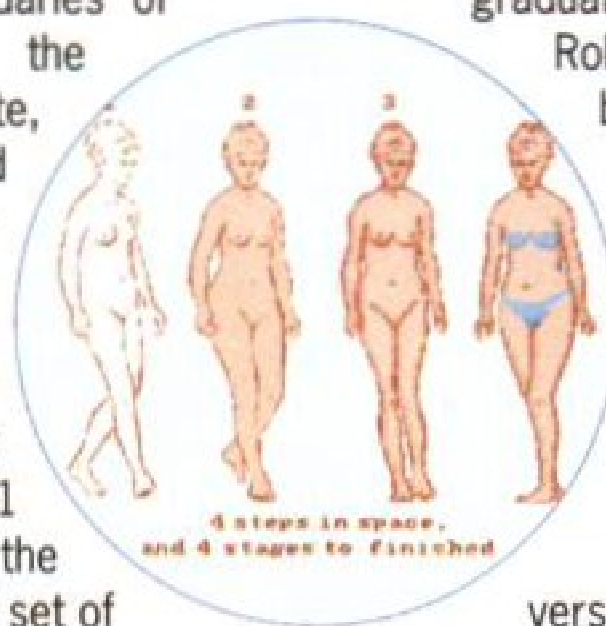
The latest Real Things picks a tricky subject that needs skill to succeed. **BRIAN LARKMAN** looks at us all.

Anyone who has used the two previous offerings in the *Real Things* series should be getting quite excited about now as the third animation kit nears completion – this time the subject is us. As usual the RGB team looks set to push back the boundaries of what is possible on the Amiga, bringing accurate, realistically-animated figures to the screen for anyone to use, whatever their skill level.

The starting point for *Real Things Humans* (RGB Studios 0825 81 2666), as with all of the previous *Real Things,* is a set of line drawings, this time of men and women engaged in various activities such as walking and running, developed from the photographs of Eadweard Muybridge.

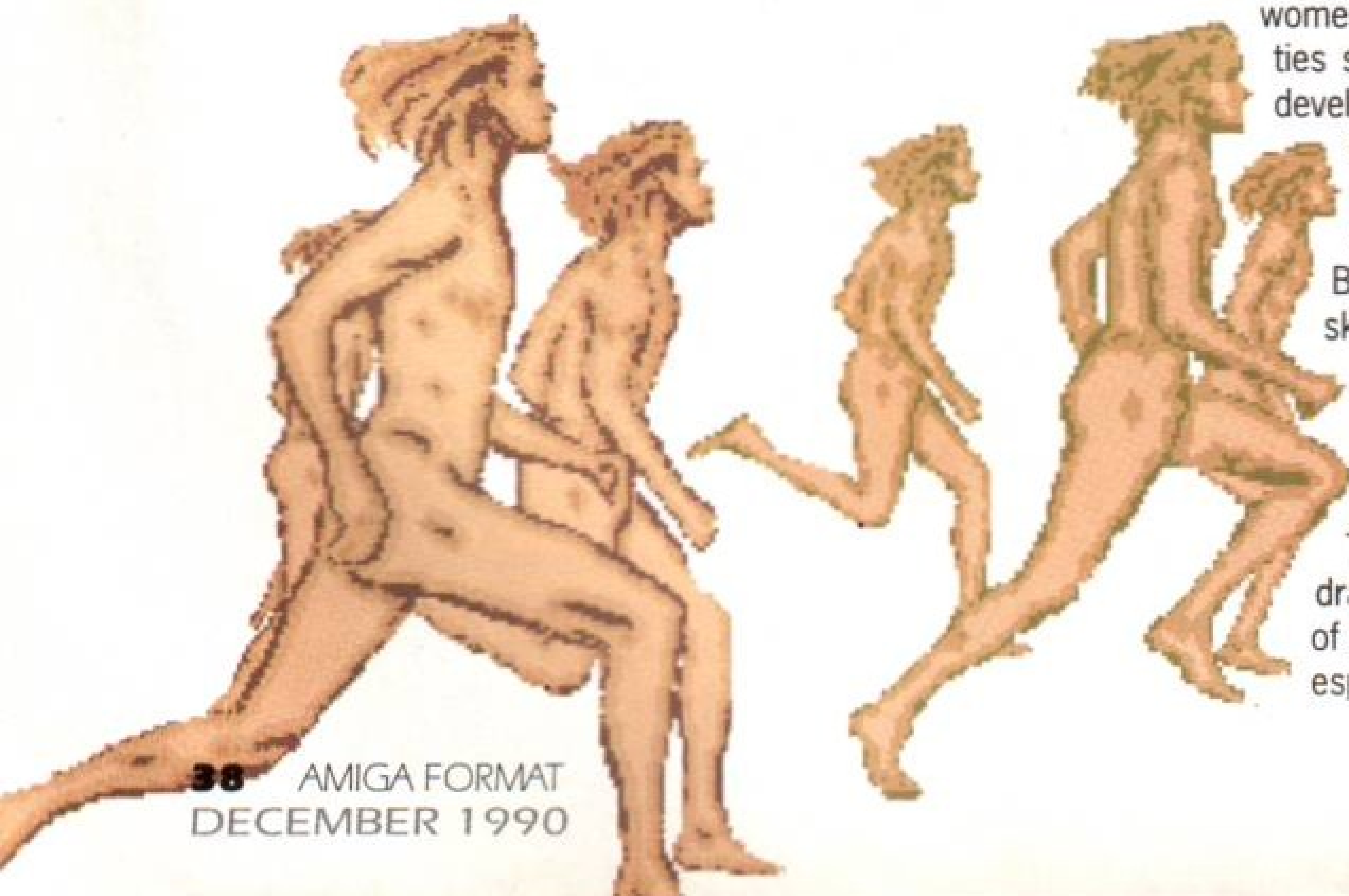
As usual, though, they are not just simple outlines. Because they are drawn by skilled and experienced artists, the lines themselves have an expresive, fluid quality that seems to model the figures in three dimensions. This is true of the static line drawings even without any sort of graduated fill, but it becomes especially apparent when the figures are set in motion: flexing muscles, swivelling joints and shifting flesh are all conveyed with a few smooth, swift lines.

The accuracy of the line drawings is confirmed when the lines are 'fleshed up' with a special variation of graduated fill developed by Robin Bilson. Each line becomes a focus of the graduated modelling, and the body contours are remarkably well reproduced, especially when they are animated.



The preview version of the software only included a few figures and these were mostly nude. The full version of *Real Things Humans* should include a set of props and clothes for each figure as well as the usual backgrounds. See this month's Coverdisk!

These will inevitably be a shade reminiscent of the cut-out dolls' wardrobes that used to figure on the back cover of my sister's *Bunty* comics, but much more fun – not that I admit to ever playing with the *Bunty* version, he lied – and also far more versatile. Once again Real Things brings out the child in us while at the same time encouraging a worthwhile learning experience. ■



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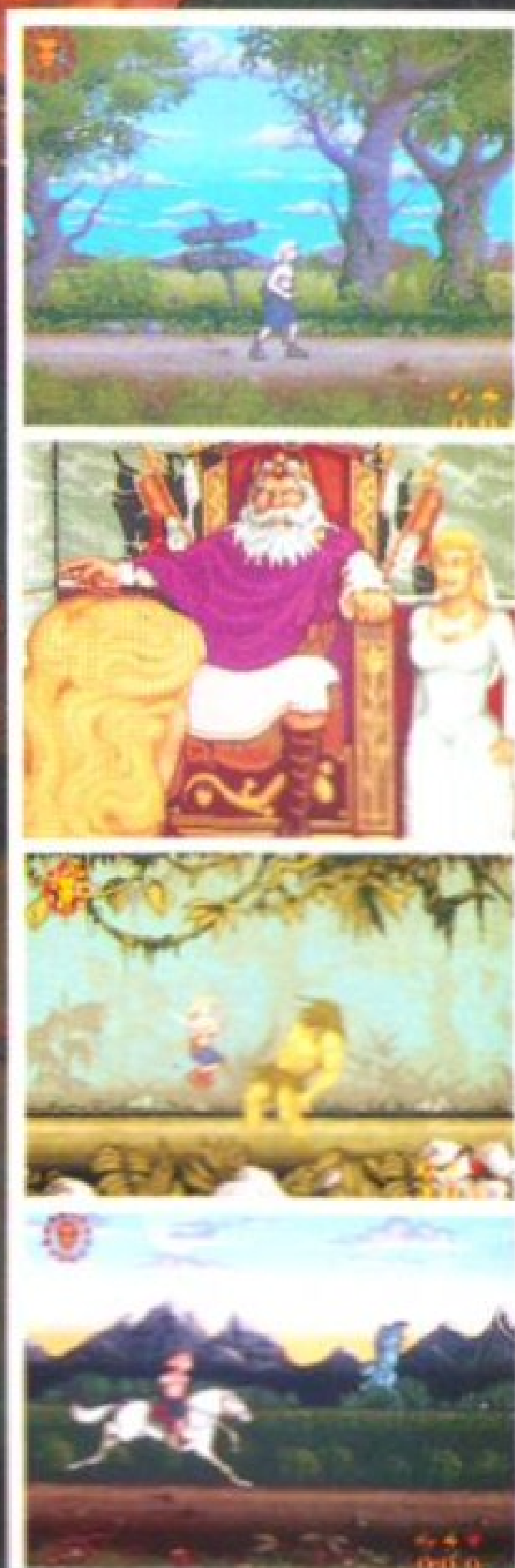
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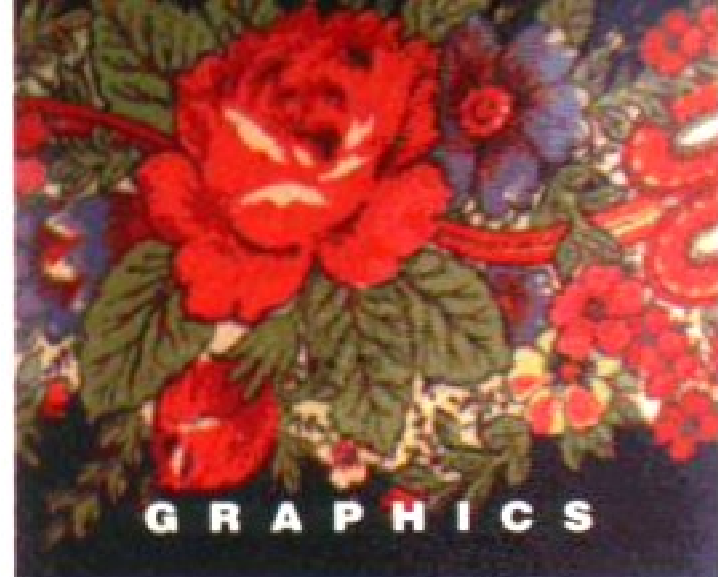
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Deluxe Paint 3 Masterclass

In the second tutorial covering Special Effects, learn how to make a picture unfold with **DEAN AGAR.**

This effect simulates the unfolding of a piece of paper with a picture on. It is infinitely variable depending on the memory of your machine or your access to a video editing suite. The example shows a cut-down picture unfolding in four sections, which will run happily on a 1 meg machine using the play programme. As memory increases, the possibility of adding sections and changing the direction of the folding increases also.

Note that square brackets [thus] denote keys on the keyboard.

1 Load up your chosen picture. (In this case, a textile pattern.)

2 Pick up an area of the picture 200 pixels by 200 pixels. Clear the screen and stamp down your brush in the centre of the screen.

3 Press [J] to go to the spare screen and set the number of anim frames to 40. Go to frame 10 and then press [J].

4 Using the right-hand mouse button pick up the top left quarter of the picture, which should be 100 pixels by 100 pixels. Be sure to be pixel perfect or you will see black lines on the final animation.

5 You will now need to adjust the handle point of the brush you are carrying. To do this use 'brush-handle-place'. Place the cross-hairs in the top centre of the brush.

6 Now, without stamping it down, position the brush back into the picture and hold it still.

7 Press [J] to move to frame 10. Stamp down the brush. (See the first image in the series on the right.)

8 Select 'effect perspective centre'. Position the cross-hairs in the same place as you positioned your brush handle in step 5.

9 Bring up the 'move' requester. Set the count to 10, set X's angle to -90. In the direction box select the right hand 'move' icon and the left hand 'record' icon. De-select any other boxes.

10 Select 'preview'. If you see a wire framed square swing out as though hinged at its top, select 'draw' when the requester re-appears. If this does not happen, check for mistakes in earlier steps.

11 When the computer has drawn these frames the requester will re-appear. Select 'exit'.

12 Go to frame 20 then press [J] to return to your original picture.

13 You now need to pick up the bottom left-hand quarter. Remember to be pixel perfect and to use the right-hand mouse button so that it actually removes it on pick-up.

The original image is shown in the 'Graphics' flash above left. To make it appear to unfold, it must first be cut down to a proper square. Then the four separate quarters must be animated, as shown in the series of pictures below. The final effect should be of a square piece of paper being unfolded, as seen in the picture to the right.













14 Position the handle point in the same way as Step 5. Position the brush back into the picture and, while keeping the mouse still flick back to frame 20 using [J].

15 Stamp the brush down.

16 Select 'effect-perspective-centre' again and position on the top centre point of the picture.

17 Bring up the 'move' requestor: for this movement the settings remain the same as before, so you can preview and draw without alterations. (See the second image, left.)

18 Go to frame 30 and return to the original picture. Pick up the bottom half of the remaining picture, which is the bottom right-hand corner of the original picture.

19 Reposition the handle again but this time position it down the centre of the left side.

20 Reposition the brush within the remaining picture and press [J] to return to frame 30.

21 Stamp the brush down. Set the 'perspective centre' on the centre of the left-hand side of the image.

22 Bring up the move requester, set X's angle to 0 and Y's angle to -90. Select preview. If you have a square swinging out from its left-hand side then select draw. If not, again search for your mistake. (See the third image in the series on the left.)

23 Exit the 'move requester' and go to frame 40 and then press [J] to return to the scratch screen. There should be just one quarter left, so pick it up from corner to corner, this time with the left-hand mouse button so as to make a copy. Set the handle to the centre of its bottom edge, to line up the brush move it over the original picture until it is flush.

24 Press [J] to return to frame 40. Stamp down the brush, set the perspective centre to the centre of the bottom edge of the brush.

25 Bring up the 'move' requester; change X's angle to 90 and Y's angle to 0; preview; draw; then exit the requester. (The last image, left.)

26 If you set the anim rate to 15 and press 6 on the keyboard you will see you have four quarters folding out and disappearing. To complete the animation we need to fill in these gaps.

27 Go to frame 10. Pick up the image as a copy, line up the brush with the image on screen, and without moving the mouse stamp the brush down on frames 11-19.

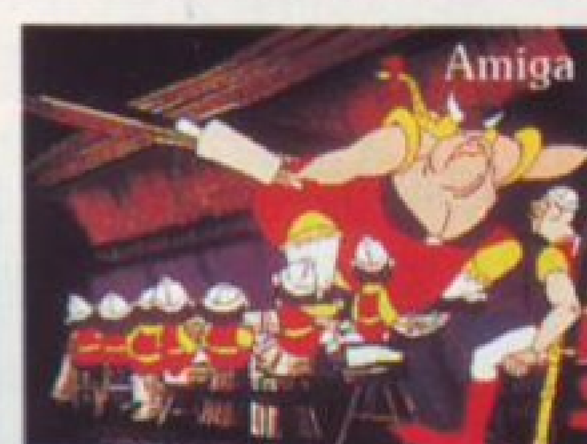
28 Now pick up frame 20 and, using the same method, stamp the brush down on frames 21-29; repeat with frame 30, stamping down on frames 31-40. (The idea should be clear from the main picture, above.)

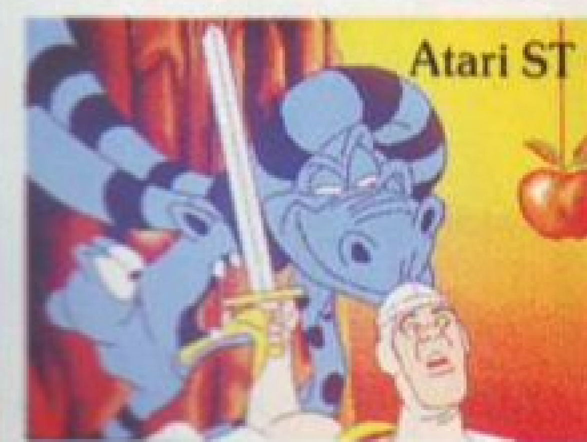
29 Press number key [6] on the keyboard to view the finished animation – you will now see the full effect, literally unfolding before your eyes, in all its glory! ■

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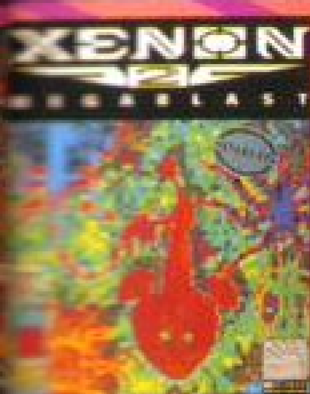


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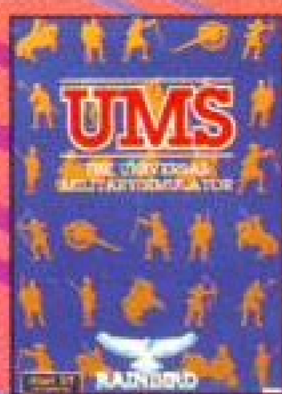
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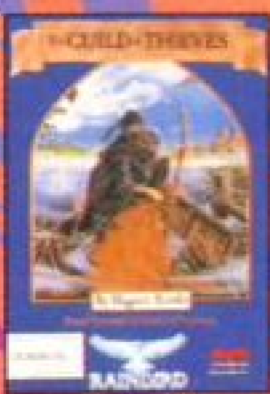


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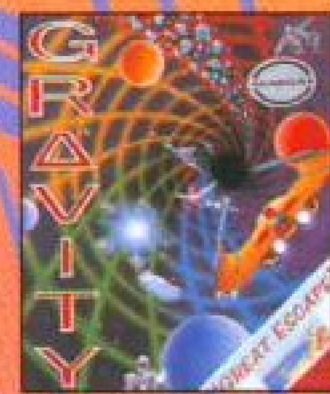
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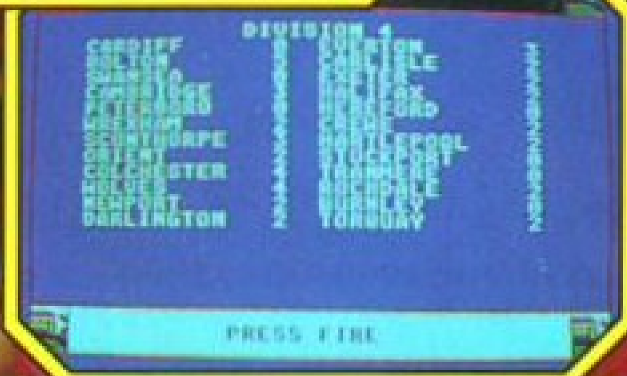
















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Addictive
LIVE THAT DREAM

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

SHARP AND TO THE POINT, WITH A CUTTING EDGE

SCREEN PLAY

THE RATINGS EXPLAINED

GRAPHICS
Good graphics are an important part of any game: if the power is there, it should be used to the full. Both static and moving graphics come under scrutiny in this rating, but remember, graphic wonders alone do not a great game make...

SOUND
With stereo capabilities the last thing you want to hear are Spectrumesque beeps, right? Title tunes and effects all add to the atmosphere of a game and good sound can greatly increase your enjoyment.

INTELLECT
How much real thought do you have to put in to play the game? Just because a game is mindless doesn't necessarily mean it's bad, but a game with a high Intellect rating says immediately that you'll need to think to gain maximum enjoyment.

ADDICTION
How easy is a game to pick up and play? How much sheer fun will you get from it? Will you keep coming back? Important questions, all answered by a quick look at the Addiction rating.

OVERALL
A percentage mark that takes into account all the ratings, plus extras like lasting interest, documentation and packaging.

THE TEAM
There are two main Amiga Format reviewers: Trenton Webb made his mark reviewing CPC games for our sister magazine Amstrad Action. After a year and half among the eight bit boys he's finally made the move to the big stuff. A habitual games player whose personal tastes encompass everything from the board-based Squad Leader to Amiga-based arcade conversions.

Maff Evans joined *AF* after doing sterling service on *ZZAP! 64*. Recently he's been splitting his time between us and our sister mag *ST Format*, but after seeing the light has come out of the cupboard under the stairs and joined us full time. Maff's a solid all-rounder with a very nifty trigger finger and more than a match for most would-be high score challengers.

It is *Amiga Format*'s policy only to review games as they will appear on the shelves: in other words, in a completely finished form. We don't review from demos, screen shots or versions in other formats.



An assassin strikes in the King's Court. A red courtier lies dead but the black-robed killer has been traced back to his master. Rather than this ploy earning an extra opening at court for one of your lackeys, it is now certain that the King will have a man executed.

BETRAYAL

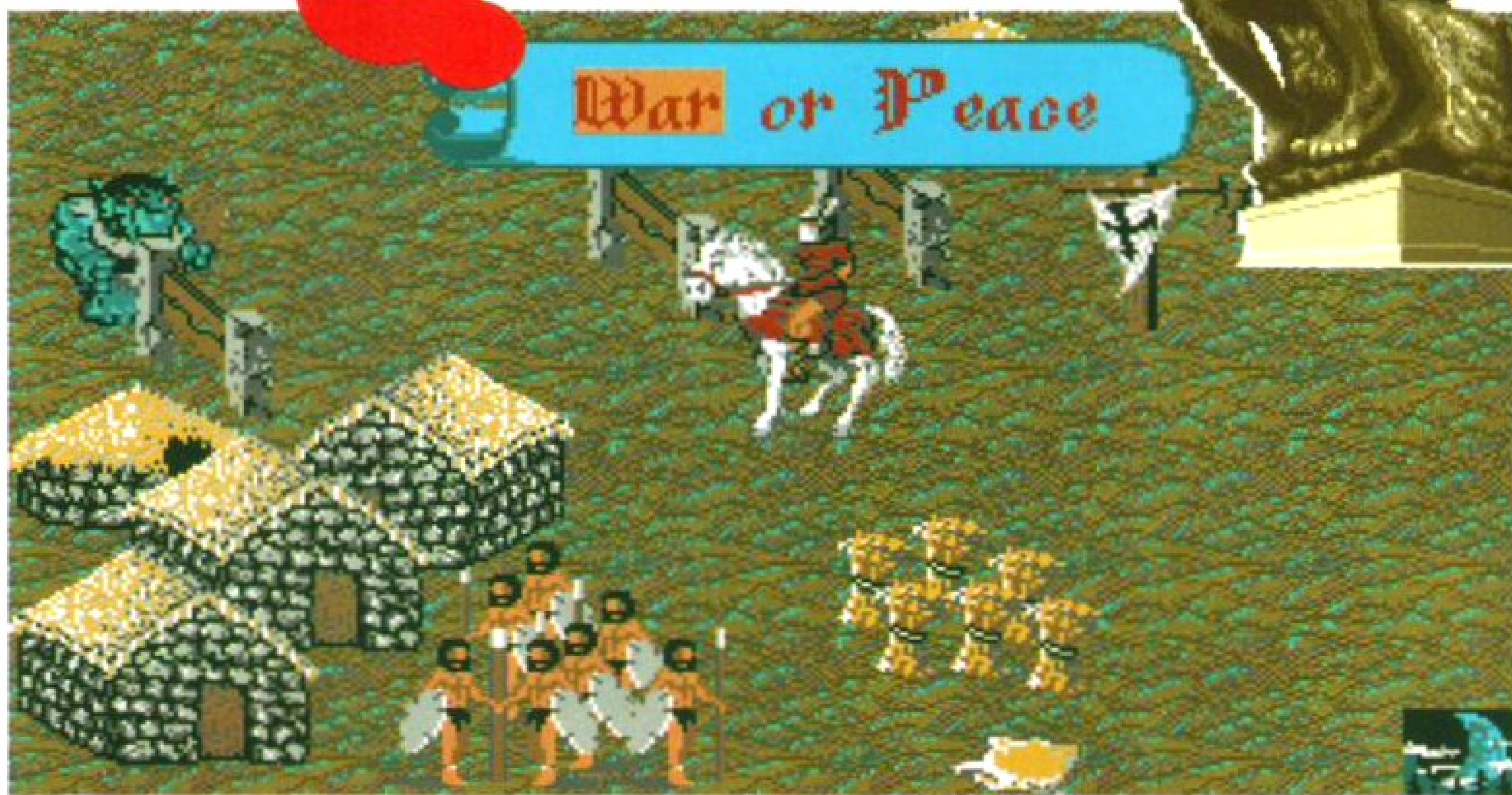
RAINBIRD £29.99 ■ Joystick or Keyboard

And thus I clove my naked villainy... and seem a saint when I play the devil!" The Book of Betrayal foretells of a time when four Lords will wrestle for power against their rightful King and Church. And it is in the book we find the true story of the West Marches' darkest hour.

Four equally-matched nobles seek power. They must dominate the courts of both King and Bishop, then depose them. Each noble has to manage estates, gather taxes, build armies, wage wars, spy and thwart the similar plots of his peers.

The four players each choose a starting station – Knight, Baron, Earl or Duke – which allots them a variety of villages and a number of courtiers. They must then travel to the villages collecting harvests and return to court for political manoeuvres. Your aim, playing in rotation over turns, is to control the twin courts and thus take power in the West Marches.

Vaulting ambitions are still governed by three major factors. Firstly, a Lord must have representatives at both courts, which requires the payment of taxes. Secondly the Lord must have some spare cash and an army for travelling. And finally he will need peasants, who make all the money and supply the soldiers.



After foolishly taking on a bigger force, the White Knight has been captured. His Gaoler has the options of release, ransom, imprisonment or bansihment. Each has its benefits, but ransom is most profitable.

In the Villages

As Lord and Master over a number of villages you have total command of the peasants' lives and actions. Villagers serve four vital purposes: growing wheat to eat, making pottery to sell, forming militias for defence and supplementing your personal army. Villages should be self-financing units, after they've paid taxes, otherwise their up keep comes out of your personal fortune.

The economic balancing act is as tricky to master as it is to understand. Making the most of fluctuating prices and the grouping of villages into units is vital as you try to offset expenditure (on the armies) against production (corn). The proximity to court becomes important as well, because each harvest has to be overseen personally.

At Court

In a court comprised of 24 courtiers, a majority of 13 is needed to overthrow the Monarch or Bishop – and both must be replaced to win. Your numbers can be increased in various ways, of which the most moral means is tax payment. For each Lord one unit of tax must be paid per twelve-moon cycle. If you offer more, and there are vacancies, then the King or Bishop may let you have more places.

There aren't always openings for thrusting young courtiers, so some have to be engineered. Assassins can be hired and enemies can be accused of treason if you've collected some evidence scrolls, or they can be purely outbid for position. Each action in court, though, requires your

presence and takes a whole game turn to execute, whereas with moves outside the court the turn is split into six segments. So very few power moves can be attempted per twelve-turn year.

On the Road

The least predictable element in a world awash with betrayal is travel. The overall game map is quite unreliable, medieval cartography being made realistically duff. While travelling, as well as the problem of getting lost, you run the risk of being attacked by bandits or other Lords. On the up side you can also attack them and their villages or stumble on goodies that have been left lying around.

Battles for villages and between warring groups can be fought out as small arcade games. Two lines of troops wander towards each other, with you controlling one warrior. Below is a battle bar which shows who the next combatant is for either side. The fight continues until one team runs out of troops, so it pays to borrow the occasional soldier from friendly militia whenever possible. If defeated, you're captured and can be held to ransom or even banished, events which can both terminally hamper your game-winning chances.

Playing forces you have to combine all these elements into an overall strategy. The choice has to be made between using all six turn segments to ride around the West Marches managing your serfs, or going to court and trying a power play. Both must be done at least once every twelve turns, but which will pay the biggest dividends? Can your fellow players be trusted to keep their word or will they attack? Have you enough courtiers or is it open season for assassins? All these questions have no definite answer in a world full of *Betrayal!*



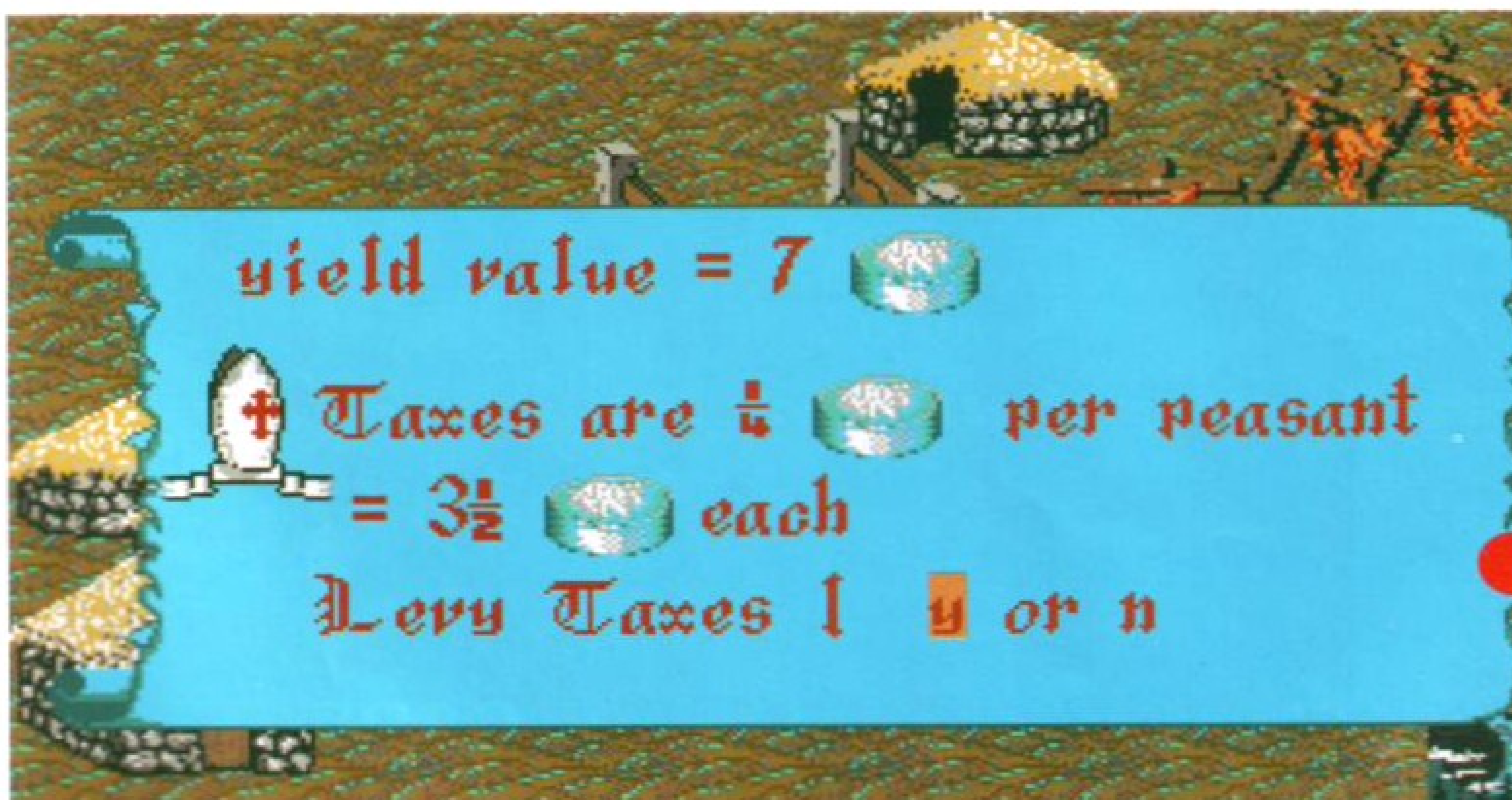
Each Lord has a personal finanace management scroll. It tells you the inside info on how many villages and troops he commands as well as how much cash, evidence and tax has been collected.



The end of a battle approaches and it is time to bring on the trolls. Players can take control as either defender or attacker, when appropriate, getting the most out of each of the warrior's sword-strokes.



The map of the West Marches. Don't rely on it, however, because it's been made realistically inaccurate to reflect the naff cartographic skills of the age. Stray off the edge and you're in the badlands!



Axe the tax, or raise it. The choice is yours every time a village is harvested. You control who grows what, who fights and how much tax they pay to either the King or the Bishop. This naturally affects the Lord's popularity with his subjects, but if they get stroppy then just hike up the tyranny rating.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Betrayal **is a strategy game, so the graphics are subservient to the intricate gameplay. Yet the graphics maintain a respectable level. The scenes involving your Lord are mainly notational, intended to convey information via symbols, and so lack great realism. The battles are the highlight, with trolls trashing troops and heaps of broken bodies lying around. Initially appearing patchy, the graphics hang together as a shorthand system that makes the game prettier and more playable. As for sound the only real feature, apart from the Olde England style theme, is the mad horse you ride whinnying at every turn.**

LASTING INTEREST

Betrayal **has great appeal to groups of players. It works as a 'one man versus the world' game but is far harder to understand and win. Playing alongside fellow novices nullifies the learning problems. Then, as they learn the parameters, players will start exploiting the game's strategic elements and rely less on sheer military power.**

Single players must be ready for a long manual session and many inglorious defeats. The economics are sound, but awkward, and four playing heads united in understanding their mechanics are far superior to one. The board-game style makes ***Betrayal*** **a brilliant three or four way confrontation but frighteningly one-sided against the solo Baron.**

JUDGEMENT

Betrayal **must be played by at least three players to be fully appreciated. Play it alone and you have to beat three experts immediately. The complexity of the game makes it initially tough, but after a few abortive wars and stupid errors, it's possible to start some really messy backstabbing political battles. The more the game is played, the clearer it becomes that no one route leads to victory and that the possibilities for betrayal along the way are endless.**

Trenton Webb

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	2
INTELLECT	10
ADDICTION	5
OVERALL	84%

IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S

SUPER OFF ROAD

GRAB THE WHEEL, AND HIT THE NITROS!





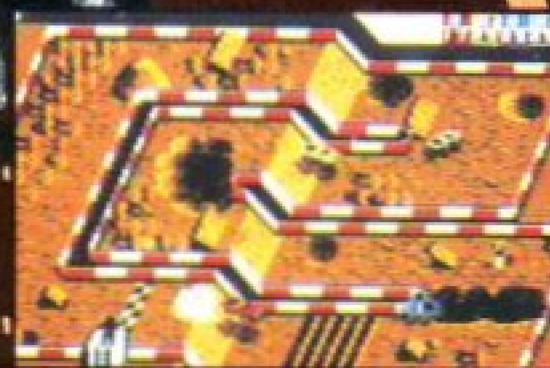
AMIGA



ATARI ST



IBM PC



C64



AMSTRAD



SPECTRUM

"Highly recommended" *- The One*

"Simply the best - and will be for a long while yet."
94% overall *- C&VG*

"Best overhead racing game on the market and a must for all racing fans." 92% overall *- Sinclair User Classic*

"A great game full of road wrecking fun."
90% overall *- A Crash Smash*



THE ARCADE SMASH!
CONVERTED BY







Running around the jungle Boots comes across the entrance to a temple. He hasn't completed all the missions yet though so dare he take mission on?

VOODOO NIGHTMARE

PALACE £24.99 ■ Joystick

Not all this black magic is mumbo jumbo – just ask Boots Barker. After a marital dispute left him stranded deep in the deepest deeps of the Congo, he awoke to find he'd been cursed. An evil witch doctor had snuck up on the our poor hero and attached a magic mask unmovably to his head. Boots was now the proud owner of a real Voodoo Nightmare.

There is one chance – a long shot but it might just work – for Boots to remove his headgear and get back to civilisation. You must guide him through eight tasks which, when complete, allow a final showdown with the Doc who will then remove the mask. Can you help Boots discover the secret of the black magic hat box?

The jungle is a strange and dangerous isometric 3D wilderness. And, just as one would expect, it's littered with temples, beasties, shops, natives, traps and casinos. *Casinos?* All this isn't immediately obvious, though, as Boots comes to. He's one man lost and alone in the land that Strimmers forgot. Discovering what to do is the first task, so some sundry adventuring, wandering and being generally nosey is the order of the day.

Boots can jump over obstacles and on the creatures he meets, killing them with his 58-hole DMs. He can collect stuff to sell or use and stand over energy-giving food to eat – large wooden masks apparently inhibit more normal methods of consumption.

Near where Boots awakes is a small pyramid with a paving slab in front. What quickly becomes apparent – because there's nothing else around – is that you have to enter it, on the first of five temple-clearing exercises. Once in, the aim is to dash about the place desperately grabbing jewels. This requires much stomping, use of the spider's web teleports and satisfying a big, bad, godlike figure's demands.

This earns the player not points, but pins, to stick in Boots' very own witch doctor Voodoo doll. Get eight of these and you earn a crack at the good doctor himself. Unfortunately there are only five temples to raid for pin purposes, so to gather the other stickers you need to fulfil three other missions as well.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

An eerie soundtrack runs continually in the background – spooky! This offsets the overtly cute graphics. The creepy crawlies creep and crawl just the way they should, while some dubious 1930s caricature natives pop up unexpectedly from the foliage. The foliage is solid enough to avoid confusion over passable routes, while giving enemies a place to hide in and surprise you from.

The isometric design is at its best in the temples, allowing the maximum view of each room. The size of the characters and the interaction between them and the scenery is good. Moving blocks by pushing is easily accomplished, while the introduction of the teleport allows for some really fiendish puzzles .

GOING SHOPPING WITH UNCLE GEORGE

Every now and again Boots stumbles across a helpful zombie storekeeper. Selling his bananas can get him (1) more powerful stomping boots, (2) a jungle cutting machete, (3) a bush road map, (4) an extra life to help stave off those dyimg blues.





To escape the temple Boots must move the blocks. Which one is safe to do first though?

LASTING INTEREST

Voodoo Nightmare is big, with eight small adventures crammed into the first half. The Temples are complex and require repeated attempts, while the need to solve them in the correct sequence, carrying the right kit, makes game-saving vital. Yet the game is hamstrung by an over-responsive control system which takes considerable patience and playing time to master. You'll find Boots falling off bridges and missing jumps just because of the lightness of touch required. Voodoo Nightmare is a large game that would take many attempts to beat if control was perfect, but hampered by such a control system it will take twice as long. Such is the incremental frustration factor of dying needlessly, that many may give up before the game really gets its addictive hook in.



Yeeech! OTT cuteness strikes back in the lion mission.

JUDGEMENT

Voodoo looks the part and sounds the part. Mercilessly big and with an emphasis on a correct sequence of play, it has real lasting potential. This is marred, though not irrevocably, by the irritating control which causes needless suffering for players who die when they least deserve it. This is a crying shame as *Voodoo* could have been one of the true greats of the isometric 3D genre. If only Boots would drink less coffee and was less prone to leap maniacally around at the merest thought of a joystick command.

Trenton Webb

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	8
ADDICTION	3
OVERALL	75%

SUSPECTS


SYLVIA LINSKY – The Prof's daughter. With a massive insurance policy on her father nullified by suicide, was she in it for the dosh?


DELORES LIGHTBODY – Ex-fiancee of Linsky, she was dumped with the loving epithet "plenty more whales in the sea". Was it revenge?


The shoot-out. Tex has to work his way across the screen without taking too many hits. He can hide behind the crates, but this stops him shooting back: a real shame as these scuzballs are just begging for a bellyful of lead. No time to hide, though: it's party time!

MEAN ST

US GOLD £24.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

His name is Murphy – Tex Murphy – PI in SF circa 2033 – and he's a hard-boiled gumshoe in the Mike Hammer mould. Some egghead took a flying lesson off of the Golden Gate and his daughter smelt a rat. She wanted Tex to find out the truth. Was it murder? The answer lay on the Mean Streets of San Francisco, lurking in some smog-filled corner like a frightened rat. It was time for Tex to play the piper.

Tex had all the latest high-tech 'tec extras, like a hover car complete with fax, a video phone and a Colt '45. Machines, however, can't solve crimes, so he had to hit the shoe leather to track down the slimeball who'd jumped Carl Linsky.

There were five obvious places to start, five people who knew the guy, five goons to bribe and threaten into telling the truth. All Tex had to do was punch in the correct navigation codes (each address in the state has an address code) and let the autopilot take the strain. Gone were the days of incriminating telephone numbers on matchbooks, now it was all about Nav codes.



Racing around 21st century San Fransico in the Speeder can be fun but dangerous. Learners are advised to use the Autopilot.

21st century travel still took time so Tex always used the 'phone to gather some background dirt on suspects while in transit. Vanessa, his secretary, was a smart dame. He'd lay one Vid call on her and minutes later she'd fax the info back. Then, of course, there was always the stunning Lee Chin, his grass. Lee Chin by name and leeching by nature – any street talk she passed on cost an arm, a leg and a few other body parts besides – but that's another story.

Interviews were just a stagger in the park to Tex. He slobbed through the door and got grilling. Tex didn't exactly have the gift of the gab – he made Hemingway look wordy. He'd only ever ask "What do you know?" then threaten, bribe or leave. All he ever tacked on the end of his questions were full names, company titles or places. Blunt, brutal and effective, just like Tex.

Tex also loved searching suspects' homes. People invariably had some dirty laundry tucked away and rooting through it was like taking a holiday in the dark side of their souls. He always kept any hard evidence he found – he also kept any hard cash.

Tex walked the Mean Streets packed, his one constant companion a '45 automatic. His cannon was the one partner who wouldn't walk out on him after a fight. In the nether regions of California where law and order seldom dared to tread, and if it did it ran quickly, he needed his persuader. Pimps, pushers, pros, perps and perverts just loved to take pot shots at 'tecs. Tex either shot back or hid behind crates, slowly working his way across to his destination.

One slip was near deadly – a few hits and he'd have been vulture bait for certain. But these shoot-outs were always good practice for bounty hunting, a fun task that kept the wolf from the door, the rent paid and the State Coroner on overtime.

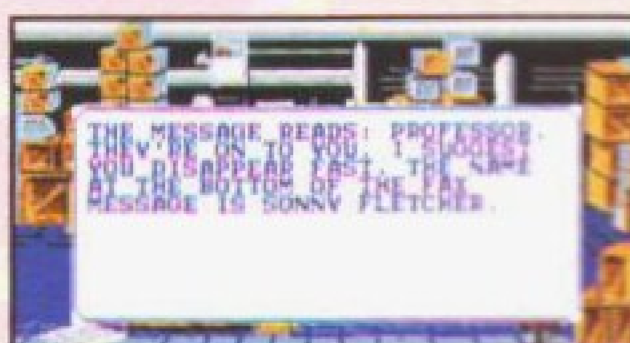

SANDRA LARSEN – The new light in Linsky's life. Was she after his body, his money, his mind or his secrets?

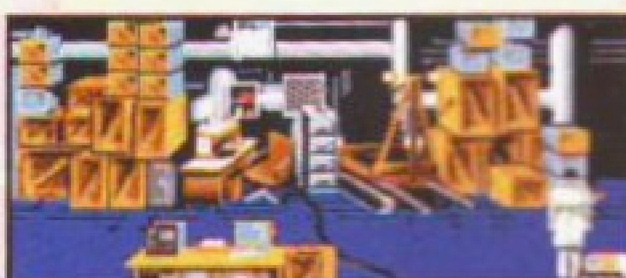

BASH DAGOUT – Low-life extraordinaire, he hasn't got the nerve for murder. But does he know someone who has?

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Mean Streets has style. It's *Blade Runner* meets *Mike Hammer*, space age slimeballs with a nice line in downtrodden urban junk. The digitised pictures are animated and ooze sleaze, giving the characters real, solid personalities. The searches are easy – the large animated houses are easily scoured using the joystick and menus. Even travelling to and from places is smart thanks to the great 3D car-flying section.

The music evokes the right sense of late-nite TV and bad Marlowe remakes. The car sections are annoyingly silent and this ruins what could have been one of the game's strongest points. Throughout the interviews and searches, though, there is some well-thought-out digitised speech, which adds atmosphere and humour. *Mean Streets* alternates between neat samples and total silence, but when there is noise it's good stuff.


A mysterious message is discovered at the warehouse.


Now what was Prof. Linsky doing with a forklift truck?

REETS

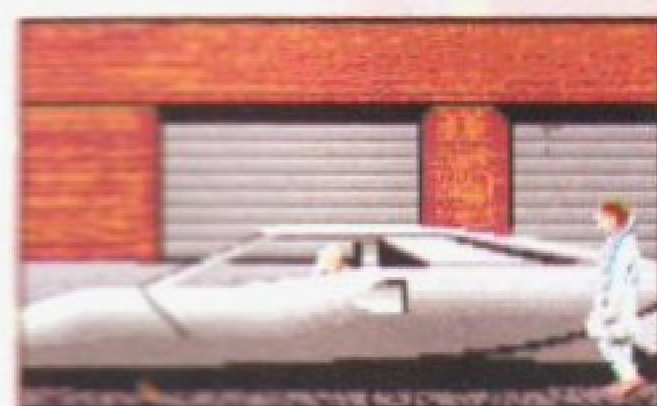
LASTING INTEREST

Mean Streets is packed with clues, locations and suspects. The first few encounters just serve to make you aware of how vast the mystery surrounding Carl Linsky's death really is, with political pressure groups, ditched fiancees and leads by the bucket load. There's a large map to explore and bounty-hunting shoot-outs as a sub-game. The various styles combine well to make this an absorbing and atmospheric adventure. On the down side, though, there are two main sticking points. Firstly Tex spends too much time in transit, especially when the call of duty takes him down the coast. Secondly, as seems to be the case with most graphic adventures, there's just too much disk-swapping for the single drive player.

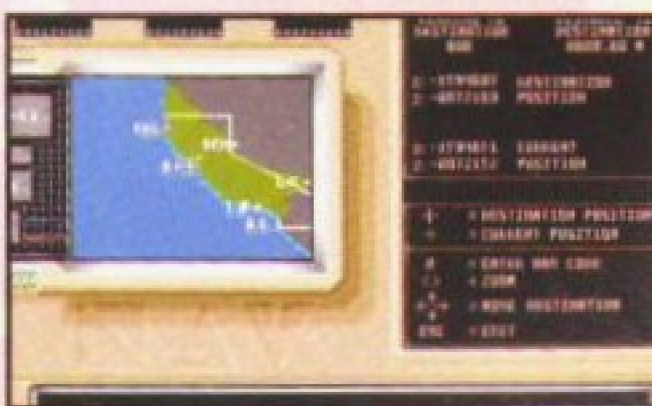
JUDGEMENT

Mean Streets is a tough, hard-nosed adventure. It's not a game you take on and beat in a few hours. It has slow moments and requires the usual pedantry to ensure success, but the satirical bent more than makes amends. The detective character is well designed and well defined in what he can and cannot do: so when conversing with suspects, he doesn't spend weeks trying to find the correct syntactical form to elicit an answer. All aspects of the game follow logical detective patterns, which helps in piecing together the scattered notes and solving the crime. Evidence pops up regularly enough to keep you interested while the plot is complexly vague enough to maintain real suspense. *Trenton Webb*


Searching the Professor's house can prove informative and lucrative. The clues come in all shapes, sizes and sorts. There are audio clues, visual clues and pieces of paper to keep. But what do they all mean?


Tex hits the road at the start of another day on Mean Streets.


One of the more useful out of cockpit views from the hovercar.


The map is used for finding your leads – after you've found them!

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	9
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	88%



It's the final lap and Ivan's in the lead as he trundles over a mini sand dune. He musn't forget, though, to pick up the Bonus Nitro waiting to be collected on the track on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Experience the trials and tribulations of off-road racing and the delights of four wheel drive, but don't expect Range Rovers and Suzuki Vitaras racing and meandering around green and pleasant lands: instead you are transported to the dry, hard, heat-soaked desert terrain of South West and Central America.

Your objective? To match the talents of Ivan Stewart (apparently a well-known sports personality in the States, which probably means he hosts the American equivalent of *Sporting Triangles*) whose macho ability allows him to withstand 250-mile marathon treks through uninhabited badlands, earning him the title of "The Ironman of Road Racing". The competition is stadium based, which makes it impossible to appreciate the scale of the Ironman's cross-country exploits: instead, four laps of the track are all that's required.

There are nine lap designs, each of which has its fair share of obstacles: large craters, sand dunes, ramps and water holes. Another seven lap designs are achieved by changing the direction to run anti-clockwise, which can be taxing on the keyboard controls for the less ambidextrous.

Enticing you to get around the track as quickly as possible are occasional Bonus Bags of US dollars and containers of Nitro Fuel which will, by a swift application of the fire button, boost you substantially ahead of the competition. Beware, however, as not only is Nitro Fuel definitely not unleaded or environmentally friendly, but it can also be a hindrance on the twisting, sand-dune-and-chicane-riddled circuits which will leave your all-wheel-drive 'Cherokee Chief' wrestling with the scenery.

The reward for collecting your Bonus Bags is a shopping spree in Ironman's Speed Shop, where you can obtain tyres, Nitro Fuel, extra acceleration and better shock absorbers, all contributing to maximum efficiency around the track.



SUPER OFF ROAD RACER

VIRGIN £19.99 ■ Keyboard or Joystick



To earn the title "Ironman" be prepared to get a bit wet and sandy, as well as to ride roughshod over your fellow competitors.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

There is never really any opportunity to make the most of the Amiga's graphical abilities because each race, being stadium bound, is tied to the same monotonous landscape. Although the animation as the trucks career over the sand and through the watersplashes is well detailed, the effects would be enhanced with superior sound. The plain diddly-dum soundtrack does not evoke feelings of exhilaration and speed.

LASTING INTEREST

Although the game is not high on an intellect level, through its simplicity it becomes addictive; the competitive element in each contestant being the key to its appeal. The game does tend to be over generous on its allocation of money, which means that picking up Bonus Bags is more beneficial than actually getting a better position in the race.



Don't worry if you only come second: you will still be blessed with the dubious pleasures of a slobbering female!

JUDGEMENT

Ironman attracted the punters in the arcades and no doubt will do the same on disk, its limitations probably being due to the fact that Virgin have tried to stay faithful to the original. Certainly if they had added a few more personal touches it would add to the attraction, but on the whole you'll enjoy trying to be the Ironman – or indeed the Iron Lady! – of speed. *Gary Lord*

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	4
INTELLECT	5
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	80%

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Cadaver™









Deep in the heart of darkness lies a swamp. In the centre of the swamp there stands a castle. And deep inside the castle the Necromancer waits.

His history is steeped in blood: A feud between the kingdom's heirs, a battle won by magic and a massacre that stained the battlements red with blood. In the aftermath many adventurers tried to unravel the enigma. None returned alive.

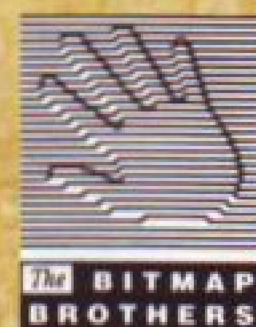
But fate has nurtured a hero. No valiant knight or swarthy soldier but a liar, a mercenary and a thief. Karadoc the dwarf is destined to go where men have failed, to come face to face with the Necromancer and probe the darkest mystery known to man. His motive? Not honour or love or a personal feud; not a crusade against evil or a deep hatred of Necromancy; but treasure! and Castle Wulf is bursting at the seams with it...

Cadaver is the interactive fantasy adventure you've been waiting for. Stumble through a labyrinth of age-old passageways, explore the mystic contents of Wulf's secret rooms, battle to the death with hideous monsters, grapple with supernatural traps and puzzle over the enigmatic spells of Necromancy.

- A complex interactive game environment with hundreds of different rooms and locations.
- Mind-bending puzzles.
- A wide variety of available weapons.
- An array of spells and mysterious magic potions.
- A vast menagerie of monsters, including mutated rats, man-size water lizards and gigantic fire-breathing dragons.

Cadaver – survive it and it's an experience you'll never forget.

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Screen Shots from Atari ST version



Coming up behind the Q-mobile. You've got to line up for those ramps *very* carefully indeed if you want to make it to the arming-up screen...

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

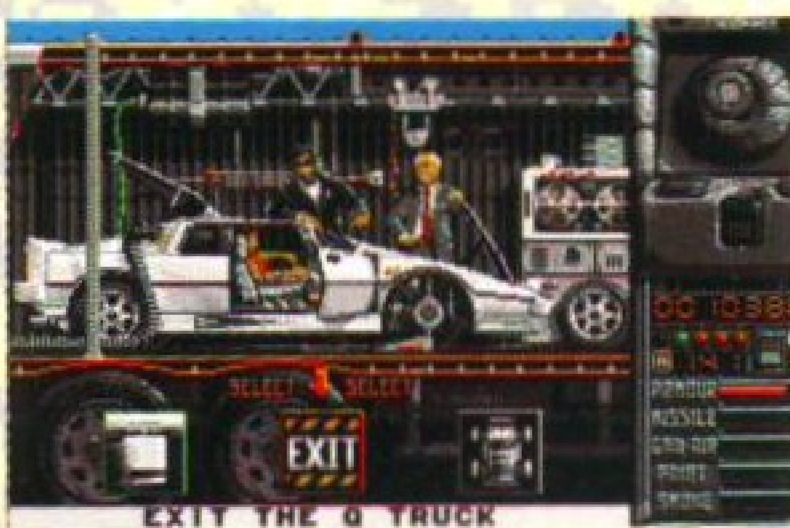
DOMARK £24.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

Bond is back. Again. This, the fifth licence from Domark, follows the now standard format of game levels made out of various scenes from the film.

In Level One you drive the Lotus Esprit Bondmobile along a twisting course collecting things called Q-tokens – you'll need them later – avoiding pedestrians, oil patches and the roadside scenery. Not too taxing if you take it slowly and keep an eye on your car's armour level.

Halfway through the level you reach a jetty where your Lotus is magically transformed into a motorboat. You spend the rest of the level slicing through the water, mangling careless swimmers and holding off marauding enemy boats. There are yet more of those Q-tokens to collect.

In Level Two you're back on the road again. Straight away, life is tougher as there are lots more enemies. In the midst of all this mayhem you have to attempt to drive up a set of ramps onto a moving Q-truck. This is where those Q-tokens come in handy. With them you can fix up your battered car as well as buy missiles, lasers, smoke canisters and all sorts of Bond-like goodies.



Arming up in Q's lorry. You can collect anything from torpedoes to smoke.

Level Three takes place in the giant cargo vessel Stromberg has used to capture the two missing subs. Bond slides precariously along the ceiling while baddies pop up out of the water and the scenery taking pot-shots at him. Bond's task is to top them in an *Operation Wolf*-style blast.

Somewhat of a puzzler is Level Four. Not too much at stake, though – only the total annihilation of the entire civilized world if you go wrong. You must reprogram Stromberg's missile targeting computer by matching the code symbols with those you find from tapping away on a keypad.

The to Level Five: and by this time the action is hotting up. Bond leaps on to Q's specially-modified Wet Bike and takes off across the waves in an attempt to burst through the defences of the island Atlantis, Stromberg's HQ, before the whole place goes up. Pick up the packages Q has dropped along your route and you'll be able to mash all comers.

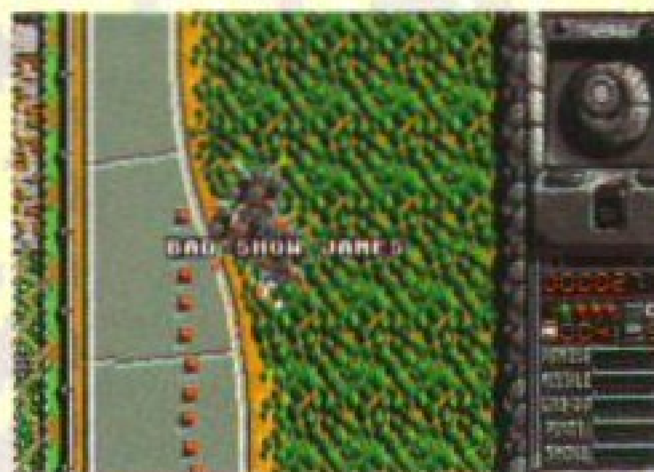
Level Six (phew) and you're not far off now. It's another *Op Wolf*-style shoot-em-up section, this time with enemies leaping out of doorways at you. At last you come face-to-face with that man with dentistry problems – Jaws...



Quick – collect that Q-token (oh, and don't crash).



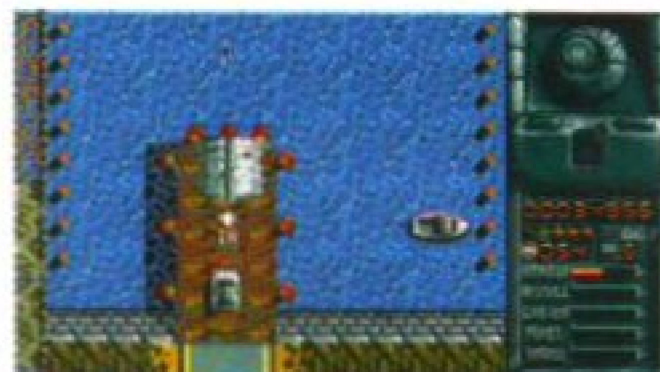
Careful with that boat – hit the woodwork and you've blown it.



Ahem. Even James Bond can have his off-days.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

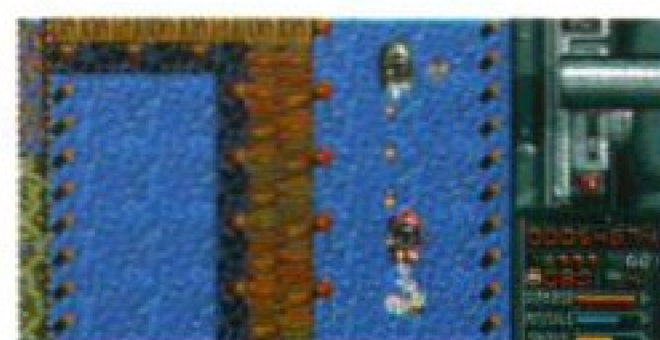
The graphics are bright and clear with no real cause for complaint – except that your sprite doesn't turn all that convincingly. The animation on the driving and sailing levels, however, won't exactly set the world alight. The sound is good, consisting of a decent Bond-style soundtrack and some excellent effects – especially the 'thumping' sound of traffic cones being sent flying and the agonised shrieks of pedestrians flying over your bonnet.



Level One and you're just about to transform into a boat.

LASTING INTEREST

The variety of levels gives *The Spy Who Loved Me* the edge over typical shoot-em-ups and the escalating difficulty as you advance through the levels is pitched just right. You'd have to be a very handy joystick waggler indeed to beat it, but a complete novice not to be able to knock off the first level on your second or third attempt. All in all, there is enough difficulty and variety keep you going for quite a time. Don't expect anything new, just good, solid fun.



If in doubt, kill! Aiming's tricky with your gun off-centre.

JUDGEMENT

None of the Bond licences have been the sort of stuff to set the gaming world alight, but they are growing steadily more proficient and playable. As ever, the levels are only thinly related to the plot – change a few sprites and backgrounds and it could be any other action film – but the game works well for its own sake, never mind as a faithful rendition of the film. Not a gaming great, but not bad either! *Rod Lawton*

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	4
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	80%

NEW YORK WARRIORS

VIRGIN £19.99 ■ Joystick

New York was never the most pleasant of cities, but by 2014 things are a whole lot worse than anyone thought possible. Organised crime has taken over the city and is bleeding it dry. One group in particular has become strong: the Church of the Third Coming, known simply as C3C to its devotees, who are a nasty lot out for total control of the city. Only a brave few stand up to the criminals and gangs. The Warriors are the last remnants of law and order in the city – and they're looking for new recruits.

You are a Warrior who has just been detoxicated and kitted out in the latest hi-tech weaponry. Your mission is to battle your way through the streets of New York to the World Trade Centre, where some suitably deranged individual has planted a very unpleasant nuclear device on the roof.

The game is a multi-directional blow-em-up, played in a variety of urban locations. Obstacles, such as holes in the ground and derelict buildings, all conspire to stop you making it to the World Trade Centre within the deadline.

Each screen consists of one particular type of New Yorker, such as the star-chucking Assassins or the heavy-duty machine-gun-pumping Ramboids. These enemies lurk behind trees and machine gun emplacements and have a nasty habit of running out of buildings showering a hail of bullets down on your bonce.



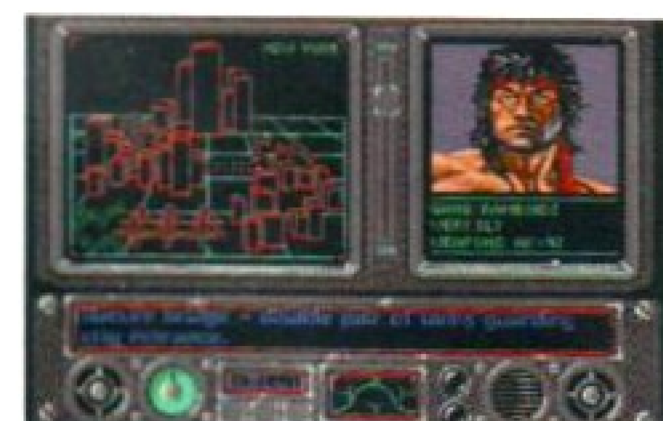
Lordy, this horrible gent has a very big gun. Those swathes of bullets are very hard to penetrate, so the only real answer is a nice big grenade launcher.

This bridge over troubled waters is best tackled by two players. Wiping out the enemy on the other side makes safe passage much easier.

These 'ere machine guns are great! A quick dose of hot metal up the bottom and all enemies fall in your path.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

New York Warriors uses a very peculiar perspective, from a high altitude, which means that buildings slant outwards and the enemies look slightly squashed. The cityscape itself appears gritty and run-down, with holes in the road and barbed wire in the windows. The enemies are detailed and large enough to be easily destroyed, but the animation is slightly off in that the Warrior's sprite tends to moonwalk when there's a lot happening on the screen. Some of the best graphical effects are the weapons. Amongst the tasty gizmos on offer are a grenade launcher, a missile launcher and a flame thrower. With large numbers of the enemy on the screen and all the explosions going off, things get a bit hectic and visibility becomes a bit of a problem. Sound is very much what you'd expect. Lots of explosions and bangs rattle the speaker and these add to the bloodthirsty appeal of the game.



Just one of the many enemy gangs you'll face is the Ramboids. "Don't push me!" Oh yeah? "Eat lead!"

LASTING INTEREST

It shouldn't take a hardened gamer too long to complete this one. However, this shouldn't mean that it's never brought down from the shelf again. It works equally as well as a quick blaster, or as a game to finish.

The two player option is a lot of fun and leads to the adoption of a rugged combat style of play where each player covers the other's back.

The main problem with *New York Warriors* is the fact that it can very easily be eclipsed by much better games. *Ikari Warriors* and *Leathernecks* both did the job much better – and those are old hat now anyway.



The Ninja Assassins have unlimited supplies of death stars, which don't do much for your complexion.

JUDGEMENT

Not original, but it does follow a time-honoured tradition of blood-letting *en masse* and it certainly has that "one more go" appeal. The various weapons crop up at just the right moment, namely just before eight or nine large barbarians appear on screen wanting to shake hands with your liver. The screens are just about the right length, so that just when you think you're about to kick the bucket you can move on. The main problem is just a complete lack of originality. This type of game has been ruthlessly over-used. *Andy Hutchinson*

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	4
ADDICTION	7
OVERALL	65%

Whoops Apocalypse. Screw up and the Big Apple is transformed into the Big Crater.

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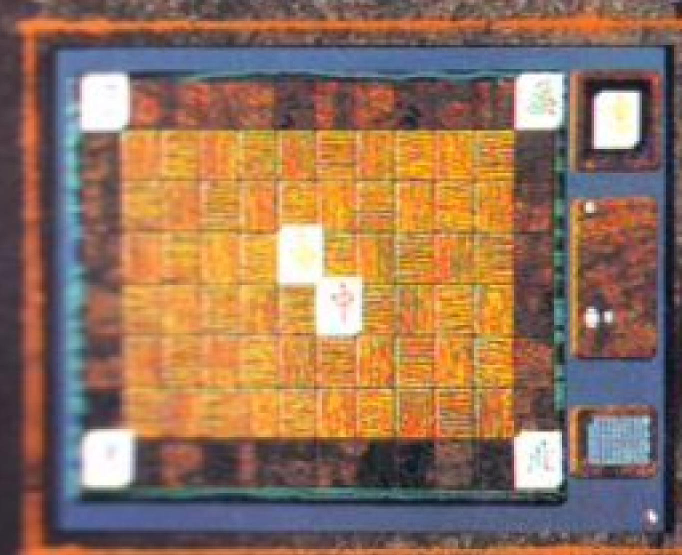
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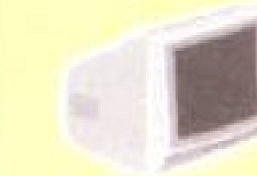
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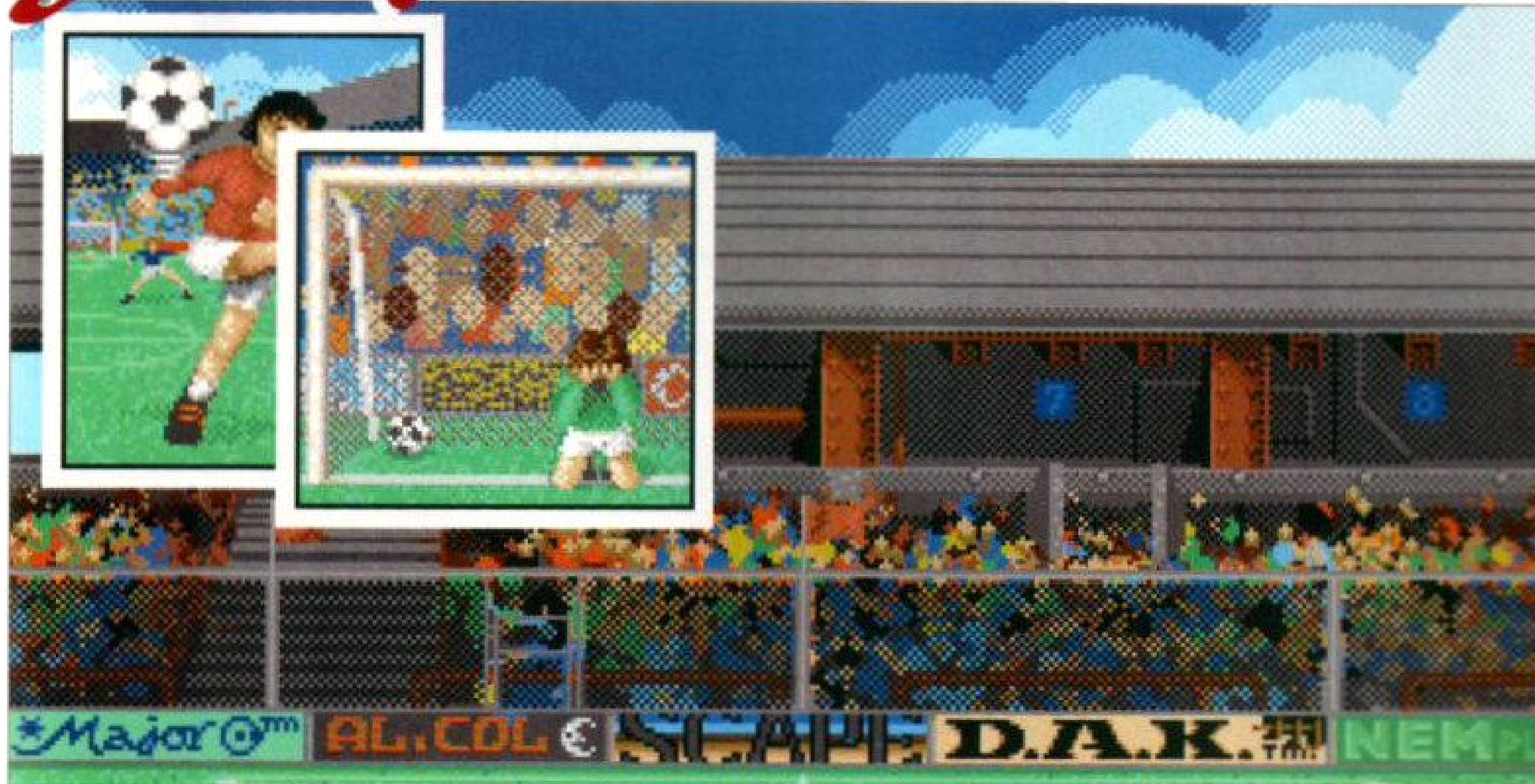
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CDS £24.99 ■ Mouse



This is what it's all about. You'll slog your heart out and frazzle your brain compiling the correct formula of class players, shrewd tactics and balanced morale. The actual match sequence is short and sharp, there's little opportunity to change strategy. Familiarise yourself fully with the opposition before kick-off.

For this bold new attempt to re-mould the tired computer football management game, CDS ought to be commended. It's a format which has suffered dreadful standardisation and an accusing finger can confidently be pointed at the lack of imagination from those who think the world begins and ends with Kevin Toms' tired *Football Manager*.

The revitalised appeal of *European Superleague* doesn't simply rely on the fact that it features AC Milan instead of Charlton Athletic. The difference lies in approach. Rather than opt for strategy – the heavyweight number-crunching of usual games – CDS have decided on a genuine football management simulation.

It's based within a point-and-click graphical environment and set at a football ground. You are the manager and from your office you can summon or visit players and staff. You can also contact other managers and even the press via the telephone.

The real idea is to interact successfully with everybody, to be popular as well as cunning. To hell with the hackneyed jibes of "the lads gave a hundred percent, Brian" – football management is no breeze. If you fail to comply with certain social mores, the effects will work their way through to the dressing room and, more problematically, to the pitch.

You are also working against the clock. *European Superleague* is based on the working week. On Monday you must arrange training schedules and lay yourself bare before the unpleasant chairman (is there any other kind?) On Thursday you must pick the team, on Friday you must work out Saturday's tactics in anticipation of your opponent's strengths and weaknesses.

But it's what you don't have to do that seems to count. Going down to training sessions, rather than arranging them from your office, will not harm morale. Telling the chairman to stick to his own business puts your job on the line, but the players will love you.

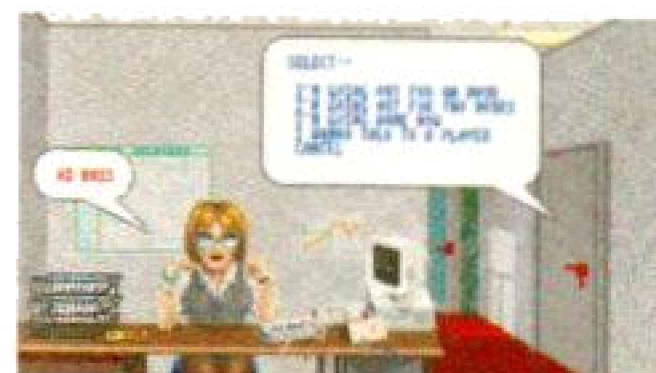
It is this level of genuine human interaction which makes *European Superleague* such a novelty. When talking to your coach, groundsman, scout or the press you will be offered various replies to click on. Say the coach reckons you are pushing the lads too hard. You can agree with him, suggest he's over-reacting, or decide that this kind of pressure is exactly what the boys need.

Another delight is that all the teams feature real players. So Waddle plays for Marseille, Grobelaar for Liverpool, Ancellotti for AC Milan and Walters for Rangers. You can call any other manager and offer any fee for any player – this is much better than waiting for all the rubbish to turn up on the transfer market.

Each player has a file (with an inaccurate picture) detailing the normal attributes and faults. It is your job to patch up weaknesses and encourage strengths of individual players. This is achieved by arranging each player's training schedule for each day of the week. This can become rather a tiresome chore, but is important.

Tactically, *Euro Superleague* offers simple graphical options. So if you click on a flashing 4:4:2 option you will then be offered 16 different strategic plans (presented graphically). For example, you may wish to play the midfield wide, mark hard in defence, and encourage forwards to run at the opponents' defence. This would be a good idea when playing Rangers at Ibrox. The game will allow you to pick five such options.

Superleague's main fault is that after an exhausting week being the boss, the match itself fails to create much excitement. Matches last about 30 seconds and, while being pretty representations, fail to conjure up butterflies in the stomach, or the kind of rage displayed by players of other footie management games.



Try not to offend any of your staff. A poor atmosphere will filter through to the players, making life very uncomfortable.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

You are presented with a series of static screens which, while they are drawn impressively, are hardly inspiring. Sound is restricted to the odd whistle blowing or telephone ringing. And that's about it.



Make full use of your resources and listen to advice. The chairman is as mean as a snake, so treat him with extra caution.

LASTING INTEREST

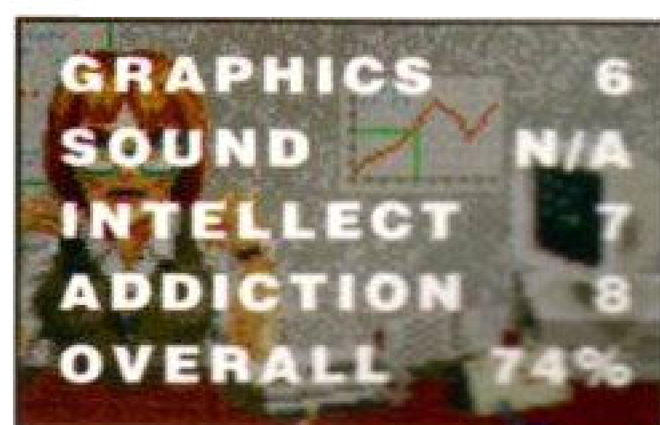
It doesn't take long to get into the swing of things and, if you can handle the drawn-out process of setting training schedules, you'll probably have a lot of fun. The only problem is that, being set around a working week, the game does begin to feel like a slog, especially when things aren't going well.



When setting down training schedules the coach isn't much help. This task can be a drag, but don't be negligent, or else...

JUDGEMENT

The user-friendly interface has left little room for the plain, stolid strategy of older management games: it is actually to CDS's credit that you are left wishing that the game could offer more interaction. No doubt this effort will be seen as desperately limited in a few years, but it's a step in the right direction now. Check it out. *Colin Campbell*



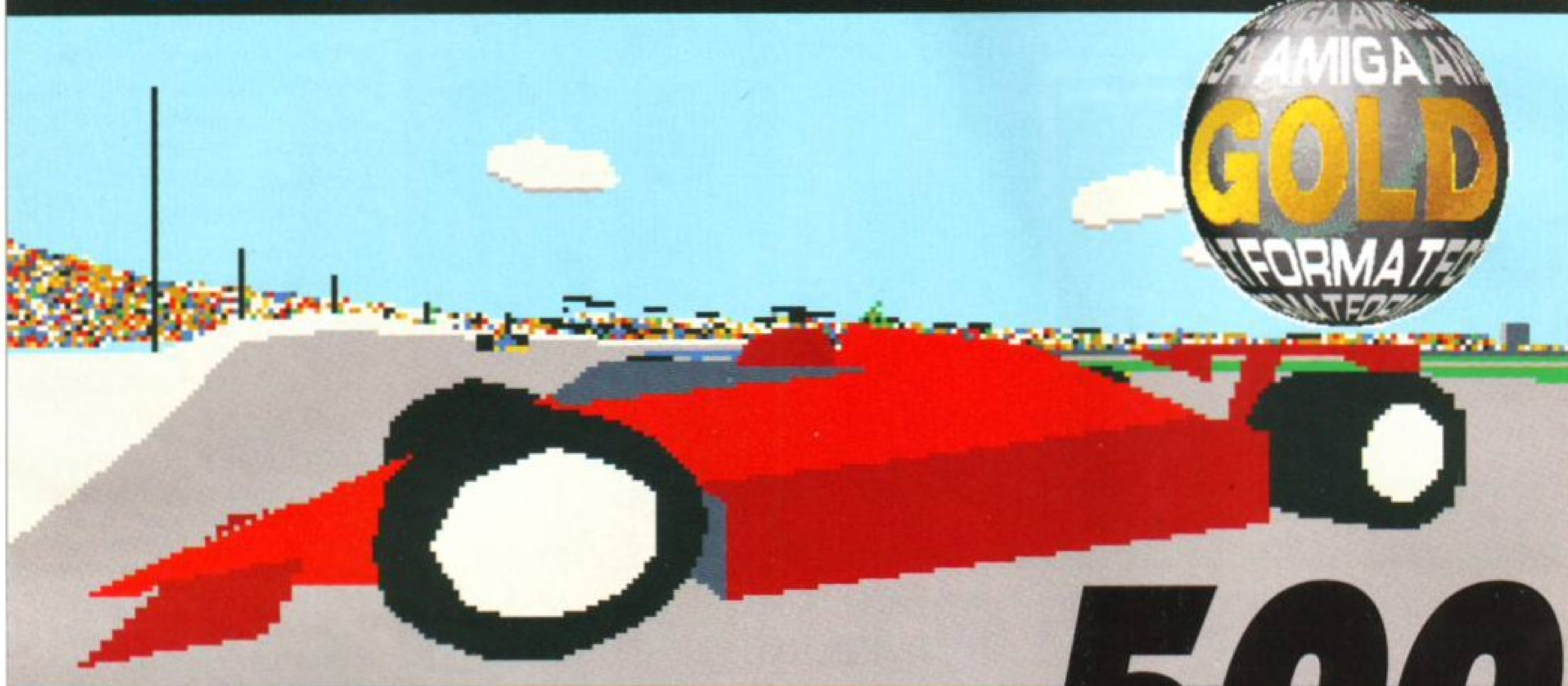
GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	N/A
INTELLECT	7
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	74%











The moment of impact, frozen by the trackside camera. Right about now Murray Walker would be reaching falsetto fever-pitch, you'd have soiled your fire-resistant Nomex overalls, and the cameraman taking this shot would be preparing for a large hospital bill.

INDIANAPOLIS 500

ELECTRONIC ARTS £24.99 ■ Joystick, Keyboard and Mouse

South of the Great Lakes and Kalamazoo, a few miles west of Cincinatti, lies one of the world's most famous gladiatorial arenas. But the chariots here are a far cry from El Cid: this is the home of the Indianapolis 500, America's less brutal but far more dangerous sport. For a back-breaking 500 miles, with the roar of engines constantly in their ears, America's car-crazy combatants hammer it out till death – or mere retirement – overtakes them.

There's nothing manifestly different about Indy 500 when compared to Formula One or any other motor race, although every hot-blooded American will tell you that Indy is The Most, The Biggest, The Toughest... and all the usual superlatives. As you'd expect, this is an exaggeration. But not totally. From the moment you take your place in the cockpit, you know you have a powerful, barely controllable machine of death at your command. You appear in the pits faced with innumerable options to alter, check and generally fiddle about with. Your most likely course of action is to forget the array of wing tweaks, tyre swaps and suspension mods, and just put the hammer down. With automatic gear-changing as standard, you accelerate up to 150 mph just in time to smash into the wall at the end of the pit lane. A quick change of underwear later and you're ready to give it another go, this time saving the power until you're actually on the track.

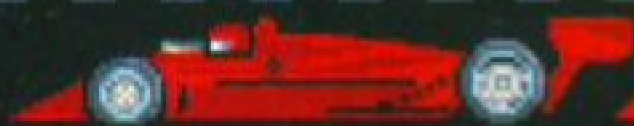
It's then that you can begin to appreciate the real excitement of racing. Flying around the circuit, clipping bends and bouncing off the walls Donnelly-fashion, you gradually muster the skills needed to tame this beast. Mouse control, with its analogue input, is far more responsive than other methods and provides true car feel.

Screeching tyres and a sideways look at the world outside mean you're over-cooking the bends. Don't hit the brakes or you'll spin uncontrollably. Instead, ease yourself back onto the track by easing off the throttle and steering into skids and wait until the car has settled down before blasting the turbo-boosted engine back into life. If you're lucky, you'll make it back to the pits!

To enter a race, you must first qualify for a position on the start grid. This means much practising, to find the perfect balance for your car, followed by a stab at four lightning-fast laps to get a high average lap time. Once you're happy with your start position, it's time for the real thing.

As with the rest of the game there are options: you can choose a short race without fear of car damage, or go for a full-length epic battle, complete with yellow-flag rules and the risk of engine failure or burst tyres.

Whichever race you choose, you can be sure that there'll be trouble. Cars litter the track, lurking behind corners just when you power into them with quite spectacular results, and leaders plough into your tail as they attempt to lap you. Chaos reigns supreme: unless you keep a cool head, a watchful eye and, most importantly, in front.









GRAPHICS AND SOUND

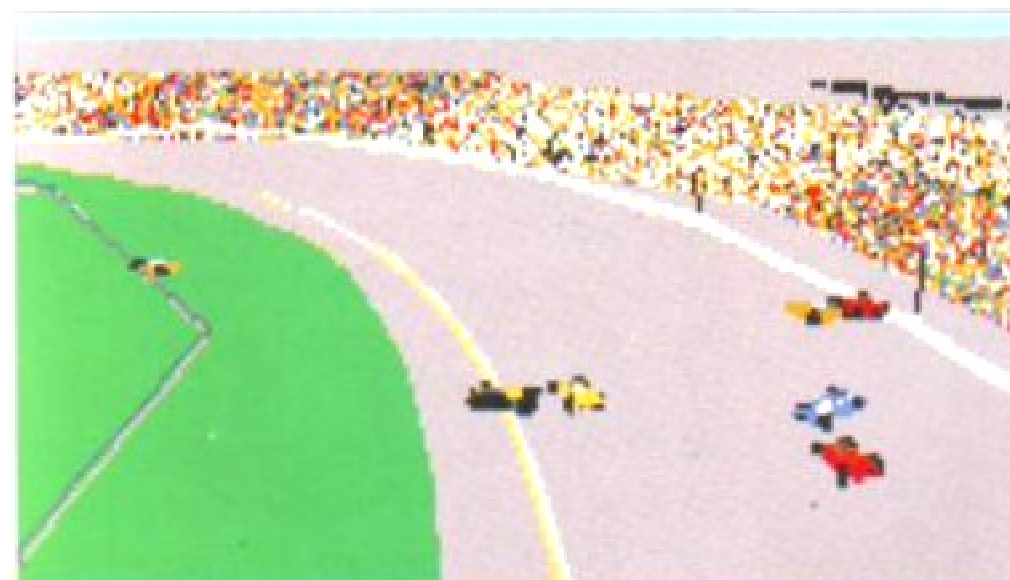
Indy features some of the fastest, most detailed 3D graphics ever seen anywhere and you have plenty of opportunity to check them out using the vast range of camera views supplied – if you have a 1 Meg machine. The level of detail can be offset against speed, but even at its most colourful, *Indy* is gaspingly fast.

Combine the superb vector-generated racing cars with the throaty roar of their engines and you have all the atmosphere you need. You can sense the presence of faster cars by the increasing pitch of their engines. If a check in your mirror shows one there, overtaking, you hear the full doppler-effect as it whistles by. Not for the faint-hearted!


Panic in the pits, as you rush your repairs and try to rejoin the race before the grey guy in front.


Speeding down the main straight, you have little idea of what lies around the next bend...


...So it's scary then, when you see a mad blue car attempting high-speed parking manouevres ahead.


...The sky-cam shows you have limited options for escaping chaos. You're the red car at the bottom!


...You strike a glancing blow on the obstructing car and begin a balletic glide across the track...


...The TV camera not only shows your spin, but reveals more backmarkers heading into the mess!


Charging into the pits is not a good idea! Pit-crews come off worst as you bounce along on the grass.

LASTING INTEREST

Prepare to end up like Dick Dastardly more times than is healthy, for the first few hundred laps. You'll spin, bounce, fish-tail and get punched all the way round the track before you master the technique and set the car up correctly. But frustration gives way to a need for revenge just as soon as you've got the hang of it. And from that moment on, there's no turning back. You've just got to win, to show those rednecks that you're the best on the circuit, and this could be the race that clinches it... maybe.

JUDGEMENT

Car-racing games have been around since the earliest days of computers and, until now, have been predictable, derivative and less exciting with each iteration. But *Indianapolis 500* captures the speed, excitement and seat-grabbing realism of racing far better than any of its predecessors. Fast 3D vector coding and awesome sounds make your stomach heave and have you leaning into bends holding your breath in anticipation.

Without doubt, *Indy 500* is the best race game money can buy. A realistic, totally believable example of an old idea given new life, it comes as a breath of fresh air in what was a stagnant genre. If you've ever been remotely into real racing you'll not be disappointed. If, up to now, you've been happy with the multitude of tacky *Out Run* clones, now's your chance to get behind the wheel of a large automobile and have your pants scared off! Hikers, ramblers and couch-potatoes will hate it, but you're not one of those... are you? *Neil Jackson*





GRAPHICS	[illegible]
SOUND	9
INTELLECT	7
ADDICTION	9
OVERALL	92%



The heat of the battle can look confusing. Your hero (in this case, a Dwarven wizard) is beneath the tree with the red arrow hanging over it. The bearded guy with the axe is a follower, while the fellow in green is an Elf.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Beyond a loading tune of mediaeval inclination, sound in *Battlemaster* is limited to the hack of blade on armour, the ozone-devouring whoosh of a flying fireball and, of course, the screams of the dying. But the graphics work wonderfully, especially in a party of Orcs: all those round-shouldered green guys shuffling up behind the boss has to grab a giggle from even the weariest cynic. The backgrounds are all colourful but clear and the stats screens are adorned with all kinds of implausible weaponry. To top it all, you can actually tell what everything is on the screen, a criterion often ignored for the sake of effect.

BATTLEMASTER

PSS £29.99 ■ Mouse

Dwarfs hate Elves and Orcs. Elves hate Dwarfs and Orcs. Humans don't like anyone but despise Orcs the most. Orcs hate everyone. Now then, who do you want to be?

In *Battlemaster*, the hero you play is chosen from a roster of sixteen, four from each race. You might be a merchant, a fighter, a wizard or a thief but whatever or whoever you are your task is the same. Four kingdoms that have warred and crumbled now face complete extinction, unless a hero who can prove his worth and gather an army can conquer all four nations and take take the crowns of each race to the immortal Watcher who resides in the north-eastern wastes.

You may start with a number of followers, which is partly determined by your character: warriors, for instance, always begin alone. Your hero is kitted out with one ranged weapon and one close-combat weapon and promptly plunged into the midst of the first scenario. This may be based on a puzzle, combat or negotiation: there are a good many scenarios and they vary considerably in style.

Most play occurs on the left-most two-thirds of the screen, on which you view all characters present. The rest of the display is given over to icons for accessing other features. Followers tag along in formation: they might engage enemies in combat, should morale be high, or try to leave the scene of battle if they don't think much of your leadership. You can ask them to wait while you go ahead, or call them to you: these commands are made via a group of icons on the right of the screen.

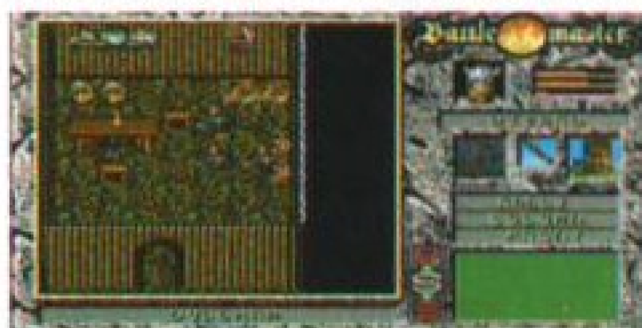
Other icons lead to nested screens, dealing with character status, parleying or travelling across the world map from one scenario to the next. You can only leave the scenario you're in after completing it but, depending on where you are in the game, you can get to a number of others by calling up a beautifully-detailed map. Action on the main screen freezes while you access icons.

To help you figure out what needs to be done in each scenario there is a message window at the bottom of the screen. Some are easy. Others demand good tactics and planning and will cost you at least a follower or two. But as you go, you'll face traps (and tricks) and will find rewards in the form of artifacts, treasure and food: all three of which are the staple diet of every hero in the making.



"Roit, ladz. Foller me an' remember – 'edz ar softest. First boy ter stomp five gets a pint uv Armpit XXXX but don't loiter or arl 'avyer."


Connected yellow squares (bottom right) are jobs you've done.


It might be rude to enter uninvited, but the door was open.

LASTING INTEREST

Though it's hard to survive at first, the number of different openings will call you back for long enough to want to sit down and start a serious bash. A large party engaged in combat with a similarly large group of opponents sometimes proves difficult to control via the mouse, but the keyboard controls (which are redefinable) are easy to master. Once you make an iota of progress you'll be fumbling for the save game option right away.

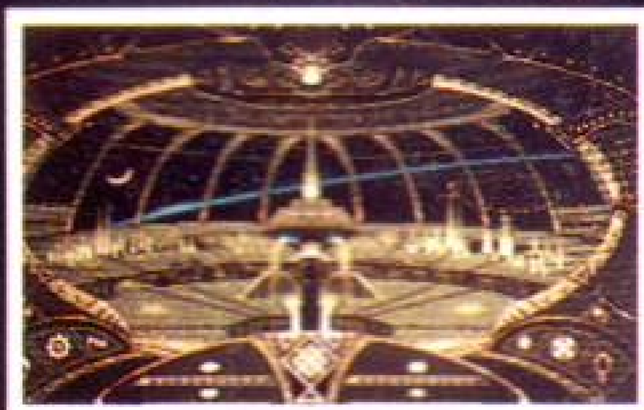
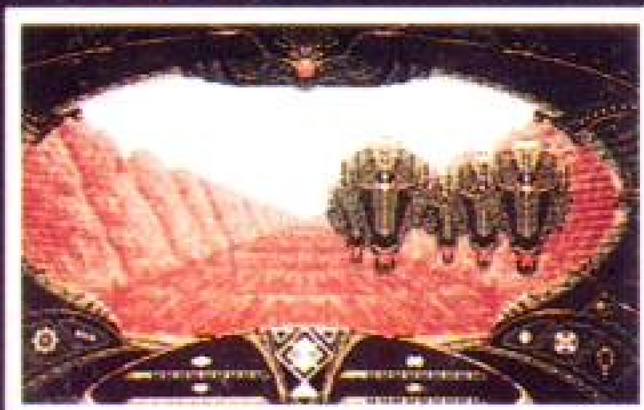
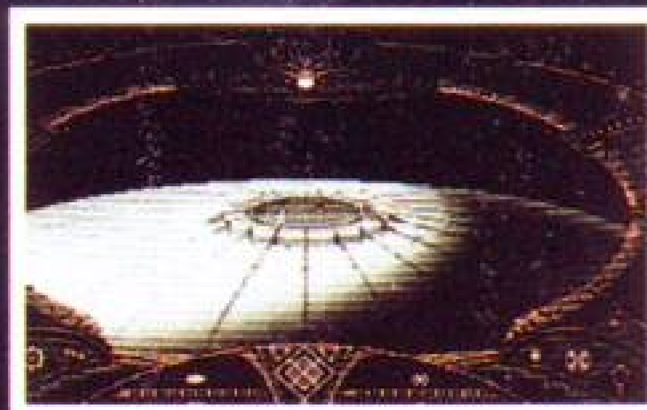
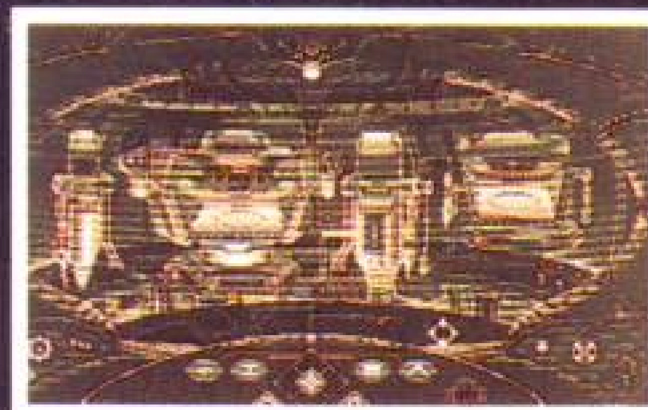
JUDGEMENT

Take a plot that's longer in the tooth than a dragon's incisor and then apply a unique approach to turning it into a game. It's not as static as *Laser Squad* and is more visually appealing than anything in the *Ultima* vein. It has a good sense of humour, too, thank goodness (this isn't given away much by the tame and tired documentation but boot up and there it is). *Battlemaster*, thanks to some clever design, has both instant and lasting appeal. This way, grunts! *Sean Masterson*

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	5
INTELLECT	5
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	83%

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CADAVER

IMAGEWORKS £24.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

Karadoc the dwarf is a thieving, lying, low-down scumbag with only one thought in his head: treasure. The fact that is that he has been sent by one warlord to take out another is only a side issue to him. Basically the guy has not had a good time of it and instead of accepting human warmth he has to compensate by rushing around Castle Wulf in search of gems, helmets, potions and gold and trying to beat things up before they get a chance to have a go at him.

Unhappily for him, his exit from the castle appears to be blocked and the evil Neuromancer awaits. Not the kind of entity you would want to take home to your mother, the Neuromancer is one of those monsters which does a hell of a lot of lurking – in the background that is. He, she or it has been in some pretty heavy battles in the past and so is obviously protecting an already fragile pysche by beating the life out of anyone or anything which crosses its, his or her path.

What we have waiting here is a potential disaster for the poor avaricious dwarf and lunch for the Neuromancer. Or do we?

Much depends on your hand to eye coordination. Not only are there severe amounts of joystick waggling to be done but there are also several icons to be used. These are abysmally described in the manual so, for the most part, you have to experiment.

The icons help you pick things up, drag them, open them, push and pull them, and generally act like a sentient being. The controls at first are not the easiest in the world, but after a few plays they become second nature and you begin to be able to enjoy the sumptuous graphics.

The downside, at least for the lilly livered, is that you also get to meet some gruesome opposition: small black spikey blighters who seem okay until you get up close, then they drain your very life force away leaving you as a husk; putrid little white fellas which are all legs and torso, who bounce all over the place with a nasty sound; long, yellow worms which can be killed but simply regenerate and come back at you.

Dragons lurk in various pools and ponds just waiting to get you.If that isn't good enough you have to avoid the green fluid which passes for water, in the same way as the sea off most English seaside resorts does – in other words it's highly toxic and will damage you beyond repair.

Pausing along the way you will find various life enhancing potions and one particular brew which is clever in its effect but not to hot if you need to move fast in the right direction. Remember to examine everything before playing with it, boys and girls.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Nice ones both. As you would expect from the Bitmaps, the sound is not overdone: it is also fairly effective with some beefy 'creatures dying in explosive agony' sound effects. The clink-clanking sound when you pick things up is a little tiring after a while but is not so irritating as to interfere with the gameplay. Thankfully all the audio works on a level which enhances the atmosphere of the game.

Graphically the game is wonderful. The backgrounds are rendered in luscious 3D isometrics which are not marred by garish colours – the whole thing has a strangely sepia feel to it. Movement suffers a little with this form of graphics: you can find yourself hanging in mid-air or losing some perspective, but this is true of most 3D isometrics, so we won't quibble.

LASTING INTEREST

Quite a lot of this. While the opening screens are fairly simple with a few puzzles to tax the newer adventurers, the game only really gets going after you've managed to backtrack – won't say where – and have flicked a few levers. Once into the main body of the game there is enough digital gore to keep Sam Raimee *(Who he? -Ed)* happy, and there is also a deal of brain power required.

While the manual does nothing to help in playing the game, this merely acts as an incentive to beat the damned thing. A definite plus factor in keeping on with *Cadaver* is that Karadoc is such a great little guy: endearing and fairly hard with it.



Karadoc the dwarf in a state of some confusion. Where to go?

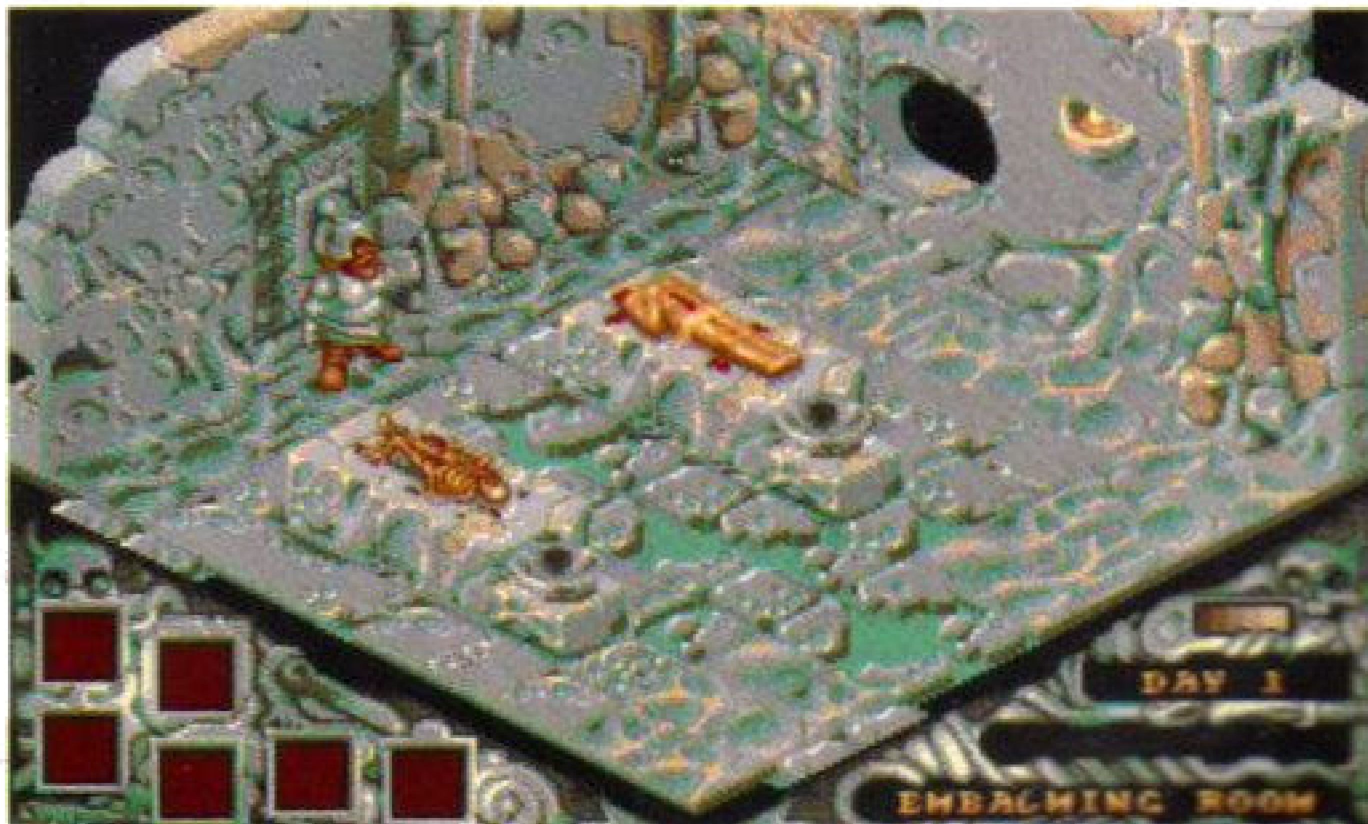
JUDGEMENT

***Cadaver* is one of those games which has taken a great deal of working and will be fun to play from now until you finally finish the damn thing. There are a few illogicalities in the play, such as losing a key, or being pinned inside three spikes. Moans aside for a moment, there is no way in which the adventuresome type, the strategist or the arcade freak (or even Karadoc the Dwarf himself) won't get some real enjoyment out of this game. Not a classic, but most certainly an excellent game.** *Tim Smith*

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	5
ADDICTION	6
OVERALL	83%



This is not the right time to deal with the dragon. Check out the stamina bar to the left of the picture. Oh well, off to the pub again...



Wrong turning, this isn't the pub. It's where the big stiffs hang out. Still, there should be some goodies to pick-up. Go left, young dwarf!

PANG

OCEAN £24.99 ■ Joystick



The maze of platforms and ladders outside the Emerald Temple could cause its fair share of problems, especially those bubbles in the top corner. Get the wrong weapon and they're there for good, so do be careful what you pick up and let them have a taste of your harpoon as quickly as possible.

Apparently, 'pang' is a transitive verb of Scottish descent meaning to stuff or cram. It's also defined as a short period of pain. Well, Ocean's latest conversion of a Taito coin-op incorporates both of these elements!

The game plots the adventures of two harpoon-wielding heroes who must travel, via 18 different locations, from Japan to the island of Paques shooting balloons en route. Sound strange to you? Well it is!

A number of rounds is played at each of the locations at various times in the day. The game itself involves balloons which bounce around screens scattered with platforms and ladders. Our heroes shoot their harpoons skywards, attempting to burst the balloons. Once a balloon is hit they split into two smaller ones, which in turn split into two even smaller balloons which can then finally be destroyed completely.

The smaller the balloons get, the lower they bounce, which starts to cram the screen after a while (hence the Scottish verb connection) and makes the going dangerous – if a balloon touches a player he loses a life (and this is where the pain comes in).

Additional weapons gradually become available to make the going a little easier, such as double harpoons and the stunning mega-fast Vulcan Gun. However, colliding with any of the various creatures that wander on to the screen disables your new weapons for a short while.

All the balloons that appear at the start must be destroyed within the time limit or it's back to the beginning of the round.



This screen isn't too difficult if you can get rid of those blocks.



Night time at Mount Fuji and the two heroes are hard at it.



Right then... line yourself up with the gap and... POP! That's it!

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Ocean have come up trumps again with the accuracy of this conversion. Both the sprites and backgrounds have been superbly designed, using full colour to capture the bright and cheerful appearance of the original coin-op. Even when the screen is crowded with balloons and creatures, the action is still swift and smooth. The sound is in the jangly, cutesy style you'd expect in a game of this type, boppy music with some nice-popping effects. Very jolly!

LASTING INTEREST

Pang's gameplay is very easy to get into, but despite the simple action the game is incredibly difficult to put down. You'd think that popping balloons would become tedious after a while, but it doesn't. It's one of those 'Oh I'll just have a quick game' jobs that turn into three hour joystick-wibbling sessions.



Player Two's got a shield, but Player One's about to be stuffed!

JUDGEMENT

Simple and enjoyable games like *Pang* don't come along too often. Most of the time the emphasis seems to be on getting the biggest, hardest, meanest warriors to leap and career around the screen spraying leaden death around. So it's nice to see an amusing little jaunt like this pop up every now and then. The cutesy sound and colourful graphics make it entertaining, but the sheer addictiveness will keep you coming back for 'just a quick couple of hours of gaming'. Altogether now..."I'm forever po-o-o-opping bubbles! Deadly bubbles overhead". Maff Evans

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	7
INTELLECT	2
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	87%



Clock Freezes all nasties for a while.



Hourglass Allows extra time.



Anchor Harpoon Attaches itself to the ceiling for a short time.



Double Harpoon Fires two streams at once.



Shield Protects against one hit from bubbles but not from creatures.



Vulcan Gun Can't destroy platforms, but flings out loads of bullets.



Dynamite Pops all the balloons to their smallest size – very hairy!

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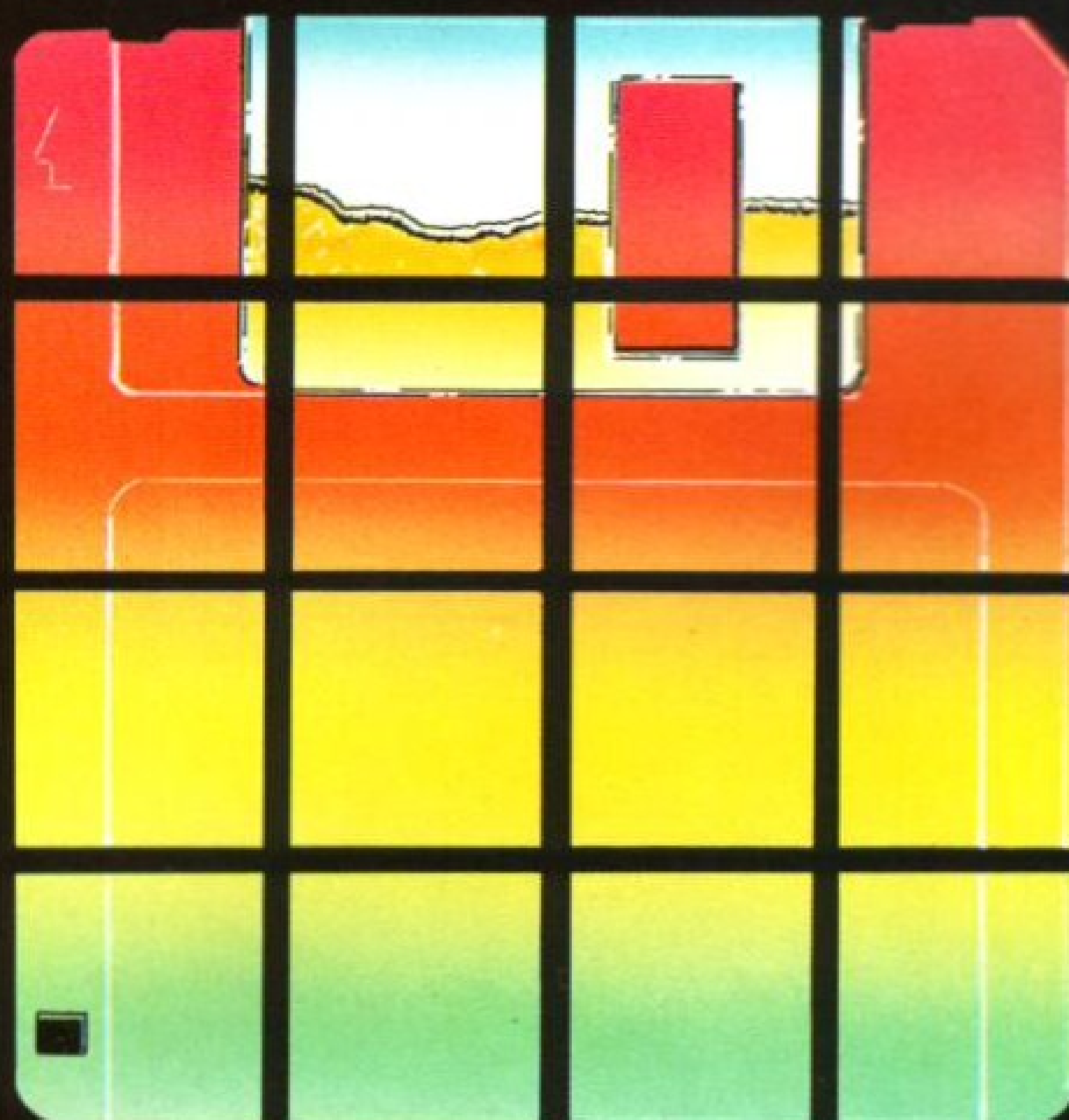
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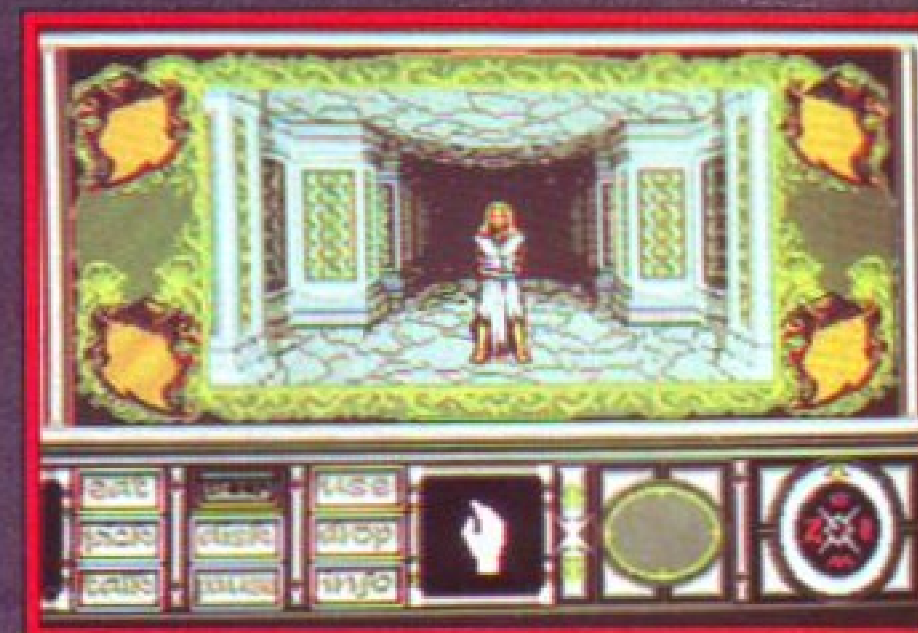












YOUR OWN WORST NIGHTMARE . . .

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You're in the depths of your own worst nightmare . . . but this time there's no waking up.

Lost and alone in a dangerous and alien world you must discover where you are, how you got here . . . and how you're going to get out!

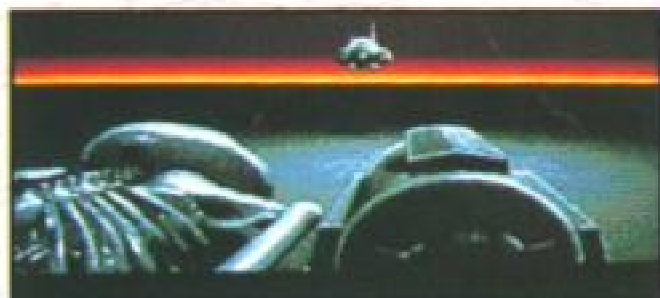
In a frantic search of the unfamiliar land you explore aMAZEing forests, mines and underground complexes collecting objects and interacting with indigenous creatures.

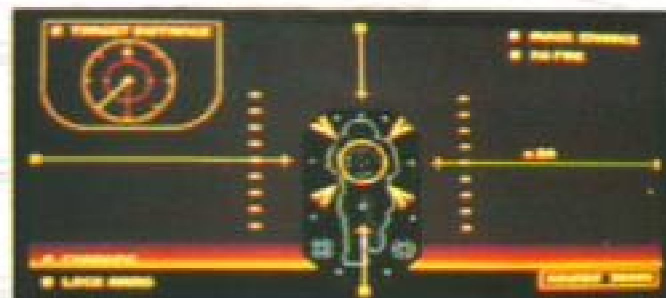
Re-emerging in to daylight you race along perfect parallax action scenes, dispatching enemies as you battle ever deeper into the unknown.

Amiga Screen Shots










KILLING GAME SHOW



PSYGNOSIS £24.99 ■ Joystick

And Bunty the poodle was soon safely back with her owners. That concludes the news for this evening, so without further ado, let's go across to the studio for the latest instalment of the *Killing Game Show!*"

"Thank you very much, Dan, and a hearty welcome to our viewers out there in TV land! You're tuned into the most dynamic game show in the Galaxy, so sit back and enjoy the slaughter!" *Cue the morbidly jolly intro music...*

This is the television of the future. Gone is the homely charm of *Telly Addicts,* no longer can you see families making fools of themselves on programmes like *The Generation Game,* lost are the jocular jolly japes and antics of *Beadle's About.* Perhaps it's not such a bad thing, then...

The television companies have come up with the answer to two problems. Firstly, viewers want more dynamic game shows with much more at stake than just a holiday in the Bahamas, so more dangerous challenges are needed. The second problem is the rising crime rate: the authorities have no real way of dealing with convicted felons. The solution to both of these dilemmas is the Killing Game Show. The TV companies use the captured criminals as... er... 'lucky contestants' and transform them drastically, using plastic surgery, into MUGs – armoured, weapon-packing cyborg creatures suitable for the game.

The Game Show is ready to begin as the MUGs are placed in the Pits of Death, specially-constructed game arenas full of platforms and climbable walls. The MUG must make his way to the top of the pit, reach the exit and move on to the next round and another death pit.

This isn't as easy as it sounds, though, since some of the routes are occasionally blocked by barriers, which have to be unlocked with the relevant key. This isn't made any easier when you have deadly HALFs (Hostile Artificial Life Forms) trying to bring you to a quick demise. Oh, and as if that wasn't enough, the pits gradually fill up with DOLL, Deadly to Organic Life Liquid, a strange kind of acid which is lethal to touch. Who said quiz shows were bland?

THE AMAZING SPI

EMPIRE £24.99 ■ Joystick

Web-head is back in town, and this time he's brought his wife! Or at least he would have, if she hadn't been snatched by arch-bad guy Mysterio. Now our 'friendly neighbourhood wall crawler' has to save her from a fate worse than death. Well, just plain, simple, death actually.

In traditional supervillain manner, Mysterio has told Spidey the exact address, telephone number and zip code of the film studio hideout where he is hiding Mary Jane. All that Spidey has to do is break in, avoid a mass of traps and then beat seven buckets out of Mysterio. Spiderman must methodically work through each and every room in the film-studio complex searching for his good lady.

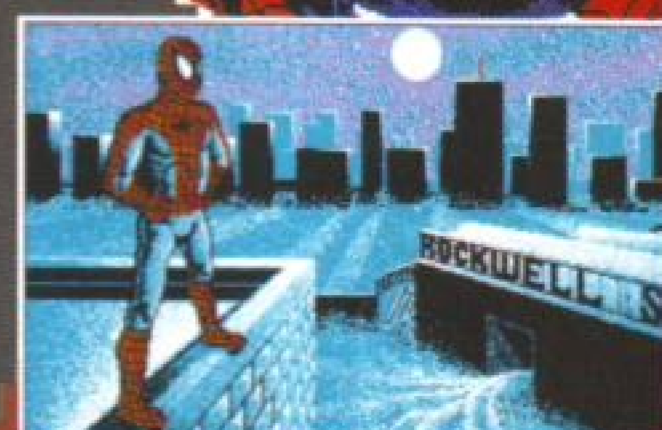
Naturally the place is crammed full with of old film sets, and each section of the game takes a famous movie theme for both its decor and traps. Most of the dangers are deactivated or diverted by switches which Spidey can hit with his hands, feet or webs. The trick is finding the right switches, in the right order, quickly enough.

Spiderman can walk on walls or ceilings and fire webs, which are useful for reaching high ledges or swinging over dangerous holes in the scenery. Even these abilities aren't enough – are they ever? – to guarantee success and its up to you to supply the split-second timing and perfect jumping to see him through this test of superheroism.

Webby has to overcome zero gravity space sets, vulture-culture Wild West scenes and *Indy Jones* zones filled with burning floors, rolling balls, electrified fences and robo-zombies. With only one life the Wall Crawler must make reaching the six energy refreshing clapperboard rooms his prime objective – they also act as game save points – if he's to be in any condition to win. Will Spidey reach Mary Jane in time or will she be the first heroine to meet the sticky end promised by the villain?







This week's MUG comes under attack from the HALFs as he tries to get to the door. BANG! That's him dead, now... damn, forgot the key!



Aha! There's the key. Now all that has to be done is get back to that locked door. Erm... whereabouts was it again?

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Killing Game Show has been blessed with an intro by the Psygnosis in-house team – and I can safely say that it is the best and most atmospheric intro sequence yet seen on a computer game. The dark graphics and manic sound effects capture perfectly that violent, futuristic TV feel. The game itself maintains the superb, polished feel, both in sound and graphics. Some clever programming has gone into making the game look excellent and the sound effects have to be heard to be believed, with racketing gunfire, shrieking laughter and clear speech samples. What more can I say, other than brilliant!

LASTING INTEREST

Initially the going is incredibly tough, but soon enough the frantic gameplay pulls you in and pathways through to the exits start to emerge. Many a time you'll find yourself saying "What the hell is this? I can't do it at all!" Perseverance is the key, so just keep trying!

JUDGEMENT

Just when you thought all the polish and ideas in shoot-em-ups belonged to arcade conversions and big licenses, along come Psygnosis with another audio-visual gem to delight your eyes and ears. Moreover, it isn't just all flash and no go – the game-play is superb too. The action is frantic, the puzzles are difficult and it has a hook which could wind in a killer shark. Watch the superb intro, then play the game and be blown away! *Maff Evans*



The extra energy pod won't do a great deal of good: if that nasty DOLL stuff creeps up any higher all you'll have is one pretty dead MUG. Quick! Crawl up that wall! Now! Go, go go! I can't bear to watch it!

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	8
INTELLECT	5
ADDICTION	9
OVERALL	92%

DERMAN



Spidey's energy is on the wane. The more of his bones that show, the less power he's got left. Better find a clapperboard room fast!



Now how do you avoid Godzilla? Maybe that switch will help.



Now what does the title 'Bad Moon Falling' refer to?

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Arachnophobics fear not! This spider is deliberately made small allowing him to strike 256 different animated position and whole rooms to be viewed at once on the screen so you can see what pressing that particular switch actually achieves. The spider sprite, although a good mover, behaves oddly, sticking to everything, which makes negotiating smaller gaps interesting, as Spidermen seem to insist on standing sideways rather than obeying the rules of walking we all know and love.

LASTING INTEREST

It may sound trite but, a puzzle game is only as good as the posers it sets the player. By this mark Spidey will have you climbing the walls in amused frustration. As well as the obvious blocked doors and dangerous floors, Mysterio has arranged for other surprises in the shape of unclimbable walls, unwebbable ceilings and illusory blocks to throw you into confusion. The puzzles and perfectly-placed game-save clapperboard rooms make *Spiderman* a game of the-carrot and stick variety. It's possible to finish, but only if you have radioactive blood and stubbornly refuse to be beaten by costumed creeps.

JUDGEMENT

The Amazing Spiderman takes a classic gameform and manages to live up to the pedigree. The characters, though small, are tolerable, the puzzles are solvable and progress possible. It's packed full of intricate switching, jumping and webbing manoeuvres which are only hampered by Spiderman's occasional insistence on standing in the wrong place. Spiderman is no revolution, just a cracking platform puzzle challenge that can hold its masked head high with pride. *Trenton 'Spider' Web*

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	4
INTELLECT	8
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	77%

TORVAK THE WARRIOR

CORE DESIGN £24.99 ■ Joystick

Torvak was miffed. Having nipped out to buy a packet of Polos and fight a quick war, he returned to find his house a smoking ruin. The destruction was the work of the Evil Necromancer. Angry, embittered and homeless, Torvak swore to avenge his fallen kinfolk by slaying the wizard who did the dirty deed.

Torvak is another one of those fur clad heroes who bears a grudge badly. He has to battle through five, four stage levels to reach the Necromancer and get even. Each level is packed with its own blend of foes, who are all eager to take the Torvak treatment. Individually these monsters aren't that tough, but they kill by whittling Torvak's power points down with repeated small hits.

Strategically-placed tombstones can be found all over the place which Big T can smash to collect treasure, extra health and potions. Lying in inconspicuous places are weapons of varying power that help fend off the growing legion of monsters. His first weapon is an axe but this can be upgraded to a sword, war hammer or morning star, each of which is useful at certain moments.

Unlike most joystick warriors Torvak doesn't fight as fast as the fire button. Initially he's beaten to the punch by even the slowest foe, which makes the fighting awkward but not exciting. Only by collecting speed-ups and better weapons can his reactions be improved. There's also the chance to pick up long-range shot potions, give the furry fella five or ten blasts of distance blade power. These are few and far between and are best saved for use against the end-of-level beasts, who are far tougher than their level-based brethren.

In a further variant to the hack-and-slash formula the exits of each level get progressively harder to find, hidden away in subterranean vaults or on high ledges. This makes mapping your route essential if you're going to find the quickest and safest way to the Necromancer. Torvak is not fighting a single battle here, but a drawn-out war of attrition. On top of slicing the Necromancer's lackeys, Torvak must negotiate the usual array of floating platforms, lethal lava pits and fatal waterfalls. Torvak is a test of timing, where speed of sword stroke is not always the primary concern.

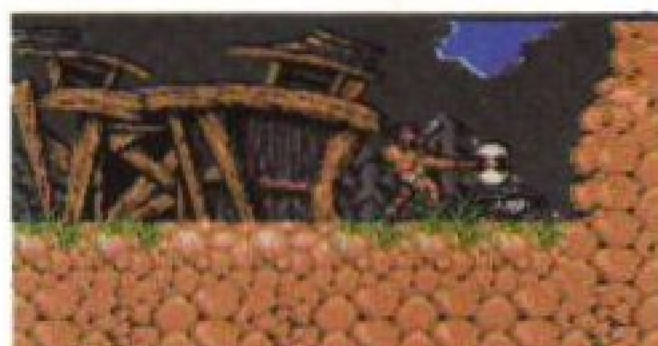


EeeeK! It's the attack of the killer-zombie slime creatures. They are easily beaten with a few well-timed blows. The goggly-eyed tree monster in the background sets the scene well for level three.


Torvak gets serious with his morning star – never has a left-wing tabloid been used so effectively in the field of human slaughter. Torvak is sparkling because he's wearing a magic shield that fends of half the damage for a set number of hits.



If hell hath no fury like a woman's tongue, then the Big T is in for real trouble as he goes to challenge the first level guardian.


Hey sukka, kiss my axe! He said ripping off someone else's line.


The stag is an end of level beast, who's easily killed with a potion.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Torvak is a heavy metal hero, complete with barrel chest and flowing locks. The backdrops grow more menacing by the level and show a healthy variety in design. Monsterwise Torvak's opponents never make it into the big league: they are well drawn but never reach terrifying status. Finding the treasure tombstones can cause problems, because sometimes they are hidden behind the immediate foreground, but once you know what to look for there's precious little mystery. The on-screen slaughter is supported with a good range of tunes, but none captures the mood of a grief-stricken warrior on the vengeance trail.

LASTING INTEREST

Torvak effectively has fifteen levels to explore and five guardians to bash. Initially his lack of fighting speed hinders the killing, but power- ups soon cure that. The repetitive and weak monsters mean *Torvak* is a game for dogged battlers, exhibiting few nail-biting moments. Progress is simply a matter of repeatedly playing levels until the fastest and safest route becomes obvious.

JUDGEMENT

Torvak the Warrior follows in the fabled footsteps of Rastan and chums. The formula has been followed rigidly, with few extras thrown in. The levels are subdivided into three with a guardian forming the fourth and final part of each section. The energy-eroding enemies are familiar friends, as is the ease with which they are dispatched. Generic similarity is not necessarily a bad thing, Rastan was a good game in its day, yet that was long ago and little has been added to help things evolve. This limits *Torvak's* gameplay to just a lot of leaping and chopping, a fact that seriously hampers the game's staying power. Trenton Webb

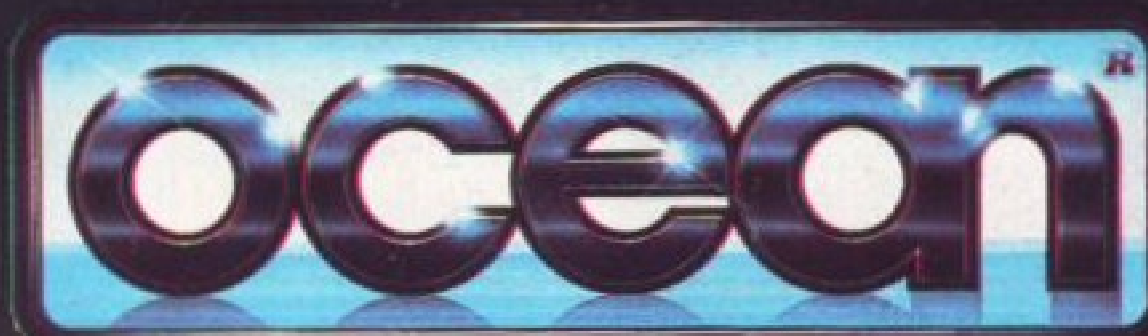

A leap in the dark, the only way to travel, for fur clad barbarians.

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	5
INTELLECT	1
ADDICTION	4
OVERALL	69%

EPIC

EPIC - A LEGEND BEYOND TIME

From the development team which brought you F29 Retaliator now emerges **EPIC** - a sci-fi extravaganza featuring spectacular graphics and stunning game-play.



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Approaching a Qon starbase, normal procedure would be to hail it and wait to be towed in. However this pilot hasn't killed any Pios and so has nothing to spend, a situation a quick dogfight will soon solve.

XIPHOS

ELECTRONIC ZOO £24.99 ■
Joystick, Mouse or Keyboard

The words "I quit!" blipped up on the screen in every Xiphon home one morning. The message came from their central controlling computer, Xiphos, which governed everything from their five-level, self-contained universe through to their pizza delivery service. In the resulting chaos what the Xiphons did was what any self-respecting civilisation would have done in the circumstances: start a civil war.

Disguised as a mercenary, you must fly a ship into the heart of the Xiphon galaxy, find the central computer and trash it. Information is sketchy, but what is known is that there are two main Xiphon factions, the Pios and the Qons. From their starbase installations in orbit around the planet they fight in small-scale skirmishes. Pios and Qons both welcome outsiders who want to help them in hunting the other side, rewarding successful killers with cash. This is how you will earn enough pennies to fuel your ship's five-system star trek. You also have to buy missiles and other weapons in order to earn money, in order to buy weapons, to earn money, to...

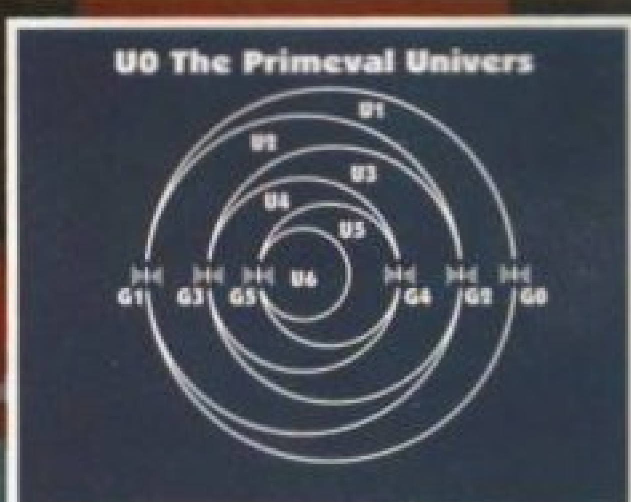
It's OK to bag victims from either side of the warring Xiphon factions and store the kill value to trade in at the opposition's space stations, spending Pio kills at Qon bases and vice versa. Never, ever, under any circumstances, forget whose station you're on, because both races get touchy if they are offered their own dead.

Xiphos isn't just about zapping around the universe blasting at anything in sight. Initially your ship's weapons are limited, as is the fuel supply, so economy of travel and careful preying on wounded battlers is advisable. You must also maximise the ship's resources, building up the credits that will allow you to get to the next star gate and one step closer to the planet Xiphos.

Trade is at the heart of the game: only by bartering for the best prices will the mission be feasible. When you want to trade, hail the nearest station and they will hook you up on the tractor beam to drag the ship in. Then it's haggle time. You can't just pay the asking price, or you will end up getting burnt. Besides which, no-one will respect you. Xiphons only ever respect strength.

THE WONDERFUL WORLDS OF XIPHOS

U0 is space as we know it. U1-5 are the five layers of the Xiphon system. G0 (Gate 0) gives you access to U1 (Universe 1) and explorers must make their way to G1 in order to pass into the second-layer U2 system. Each gate exerts a 'gravitational' field effect. This means more energy is expended flying towards an exit gate than an entrance. For ease of comprehension among human pilots the two are viewed



by the ship's on-board computer as North/South poles. Note, too that the gateways are controlled and a transit tax is levied on all who pass through, so make sure you've plenty of credits spare.



Oh deary me! I must be dead, because that's *my* coffin there!



A Pio ship makes itself a sitting target. So spend, spend, spend!

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

This is a seriously smooth trip into the land of all that's weird. The 3D universe lets you ning off in all directions at eye-befuddling speed. The graphics make combat realistically tough. No long laser duels here: ships flash past, making anticipation firing essential until you can afford homing missiles. The ships are well drawn in the vector style, as are the bases, and the further you get into the game, the more varied the designs become. The control panel is laid out in classic *Elite* fashion, with the all-important radar clearly visible in the centre. Other controls are not so easily deciphered and make it tough on the monitoring front.

LASTING INTEREST

There are five different universes to explore, which means there's plenty of flying and fighting before you finally have a chance to waste the computer. With the arts of war and commerce to master there's learning potential by the score. Yet getting rich enough to buy the more exotic goodies is hard going – many pilots will be lost before you leave the first galaxy. Earning cash is directly dependent on killing, and since killing is difficult, initial appeal is limited. Plus the ship starts out seriously weak so you must bag a couple of Xiphons just for a fuel top-up.

JUDGEMENT

In the beginning there was *Elite*. The software houses looked at it and realised it was a winner. With the genre now established many have tried to produce an *Elite* beater. *Xiphos* has better graphics, a stranger universe and great subtlety. Yet somehow this doesn't help it beat its archetypal forerunner. The trading options are initially too limited with pilots caught in a never-ending cycle of killing and refuelling, unable to gather enough credits to make exploration possible. Really it is a space-trading sim that is only for the seriously committed. Others will find it monstrously testing on the stamina front, even when they are just trying to maintain enough energy to keep the ship running. *Trenton Webb*

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	3
INTELLECT	8
ADDICTION	5
OVERALL	80%

Some cars, especially red ones, just sit there and beg "drive me" and the new, curvy *Lotus Esprit Turbo* is just such a motor. But if you take Gremlin's Challenge you won't drive one at all – you'll drive two.

Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge sets a thoroughbred car in a head-to-head charge to the finish line. You take the wheel of a spiffy shiny red sportster that's racing against 19 cars of exactly the same spec, so winning is down to skill and not horsepower. Your task is to finish first after a preset number of laps, a possible stop for fuel, a few gut-churning hills, numerous hairpin bends, quite monumental amounts of atrocious driving by the computer cars and vast quantities of outrageous cheating by other human racer.

The two human-controlled cars have half a screen each. If the other guy gets ahead, you can see him scream off into the distance. If he's just behind, you can sneak a quick peek at his half of the screen to help avoid collisions. The white drone cars must be considered just as dangerous as, if not more dangerous than, their red human counterparts. Designed to protect their racing line, they sweep out in front of you and slide into corners, cutting off overtaking routes.

Winning isn't the most important thing – it is the only thing. You start the first meeting placed last on the grid and must work your way through the field to finish at least 10th to qualify for the next race. This is no mean feat when there are cars blocking good starts and mad geeks cutting you up at every turn.

On longer courses there's the challenge of negotiating fuel stops and maintaining your place in the face of ever stiffer competition.

Your position in the last race determines your starting place for the next. Win a race and you kick off from the back of the grid. As you compete for the Lotus licence the tracks get ever more tortuous with sharper bends, nasty road-works, big rocks and huge sign-posts – all out to prang your car.

Damage is not a problem, but the ensuing loss of time is. If you tag a tree then your engine takes time to build the revs back up. The Lotus has legendary acceleration, but it's not fast enough to keep pace with those lucky people who manage to avoid the danger and stay on the road.

As the pressure to win builds, you have to try more outrageous passing manoeuvres and risk those time-devouring shunts. Luckily your Lotus handles well, but everybody has these advantages so you must exploit them fully to get ahead.

To help players get the most out of their red speeders there is the choice of either manual or automatic gears, as well as two different styles of joystick control and a mouse option.

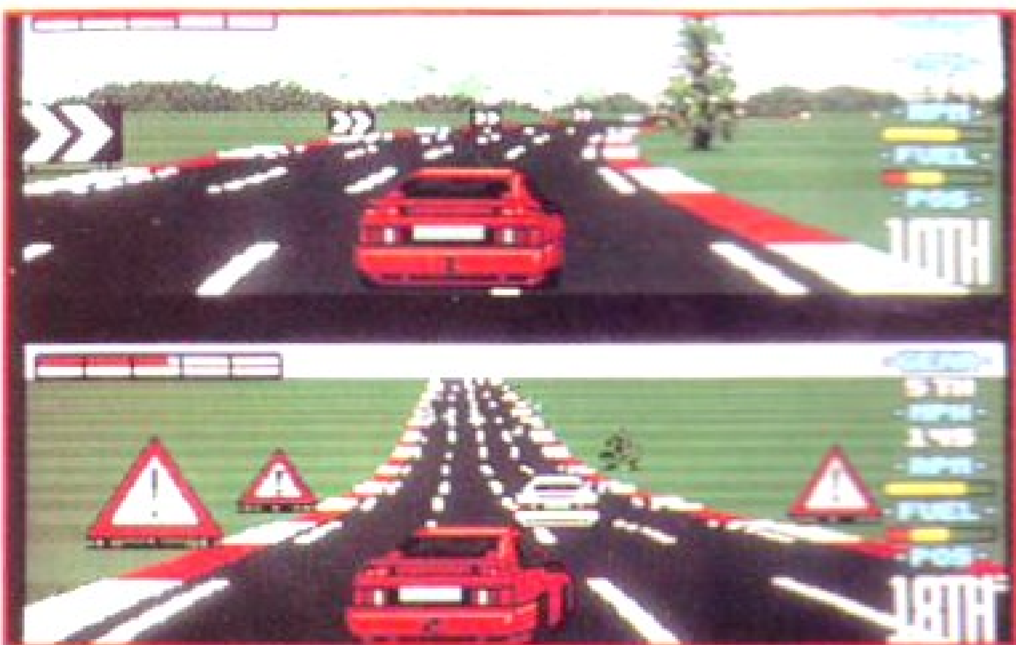
Four levels of difficulty (though that's including practice) lend the game great variety, as does the number of totally insane race tracks. You'll never notice them, though, because the car's so swift everything becomes a blurr. Even the background and sound effects are completely ignored by drivers whose attention is locked into a race, because you're too busy shouting obscenities at drone cars driven by nutters!



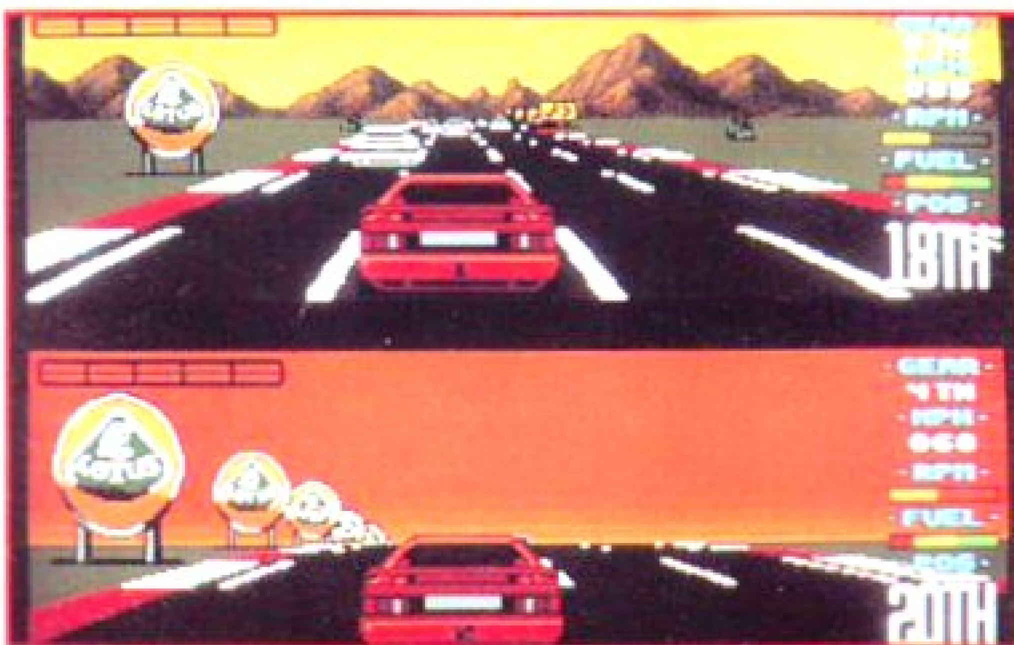
LOTUS TURBO ESPRIT CHALLENGE

GREMLIN GRAPHICS £24.99 ■ Joystick or Mouse

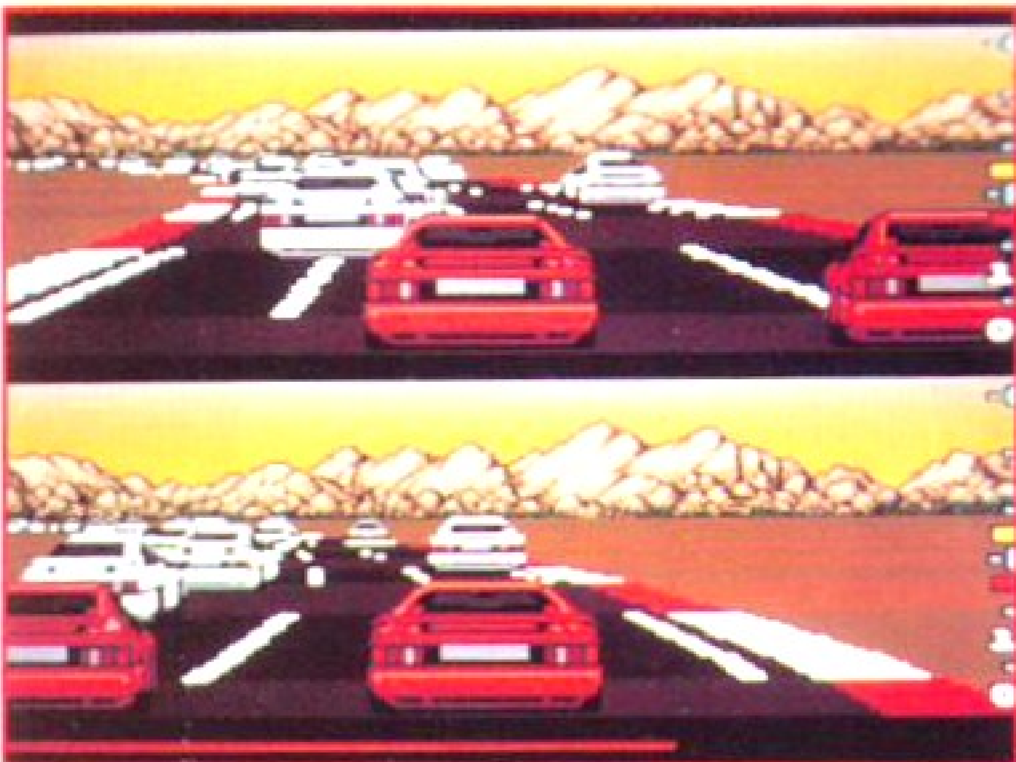
Team Lotus get serious: they have to if they want to win. Look at the losers trailing around in 15th place! It's outrageous, you give a guy a shiny new ultra-fast supercar and what does he do? Drive it at a speed that makes Miss Daisy look reckless. Still, he does have another four laps to catch up. Even using all of the car's power, manual gears and drift steering he still has to contend with the dangerously deranged computer drivers, who move into your way the split second you hoped they wouldn't.



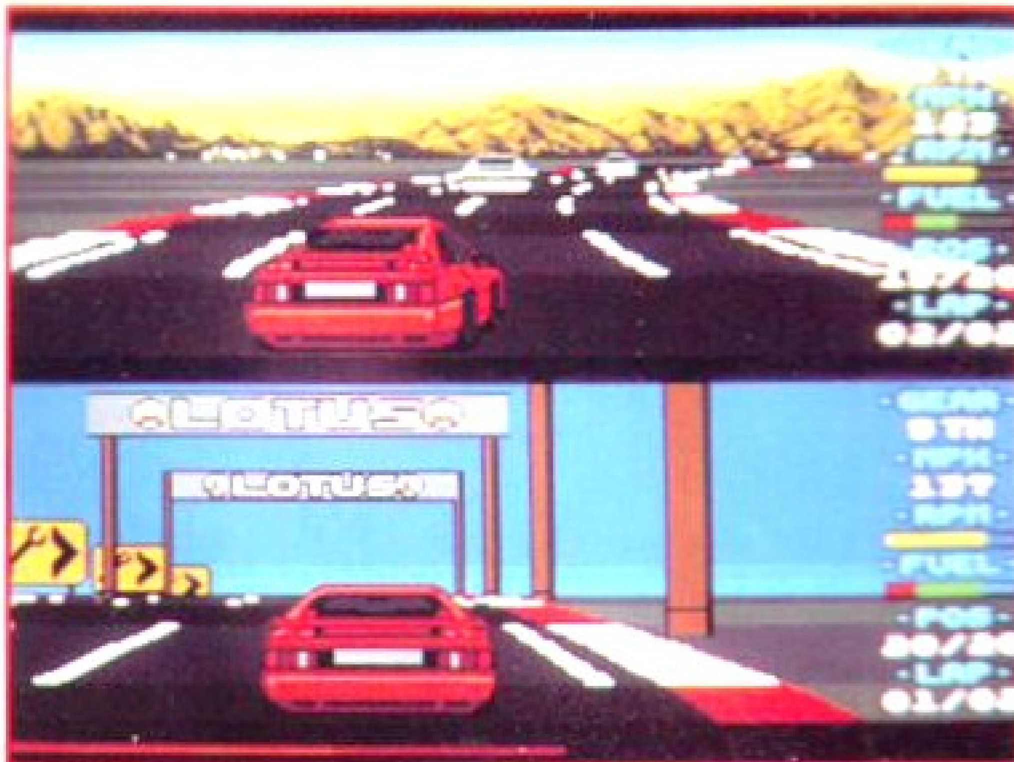
Caution! Those Gremlins seem determined to make life awkward, they've put roadworks on the track!



Win a race and you start at the back of the grid for the next one. Life can be so cruel.



Get out of the way you little...! Starts are really too hard – there's no room to overtake anybody.



Now either we've left everyone for dead, or 20 MPH isn't quite racing speed for these Lotus car things.

LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO SE

ENGINE - Mid-mounted Lotus 2.2 litre aluminium alloy 16-valve chargecooled engine.

Water-cooled TB03 turbocharger with integral wastegate.

Multi-point fuel injection system with electronic ignition.

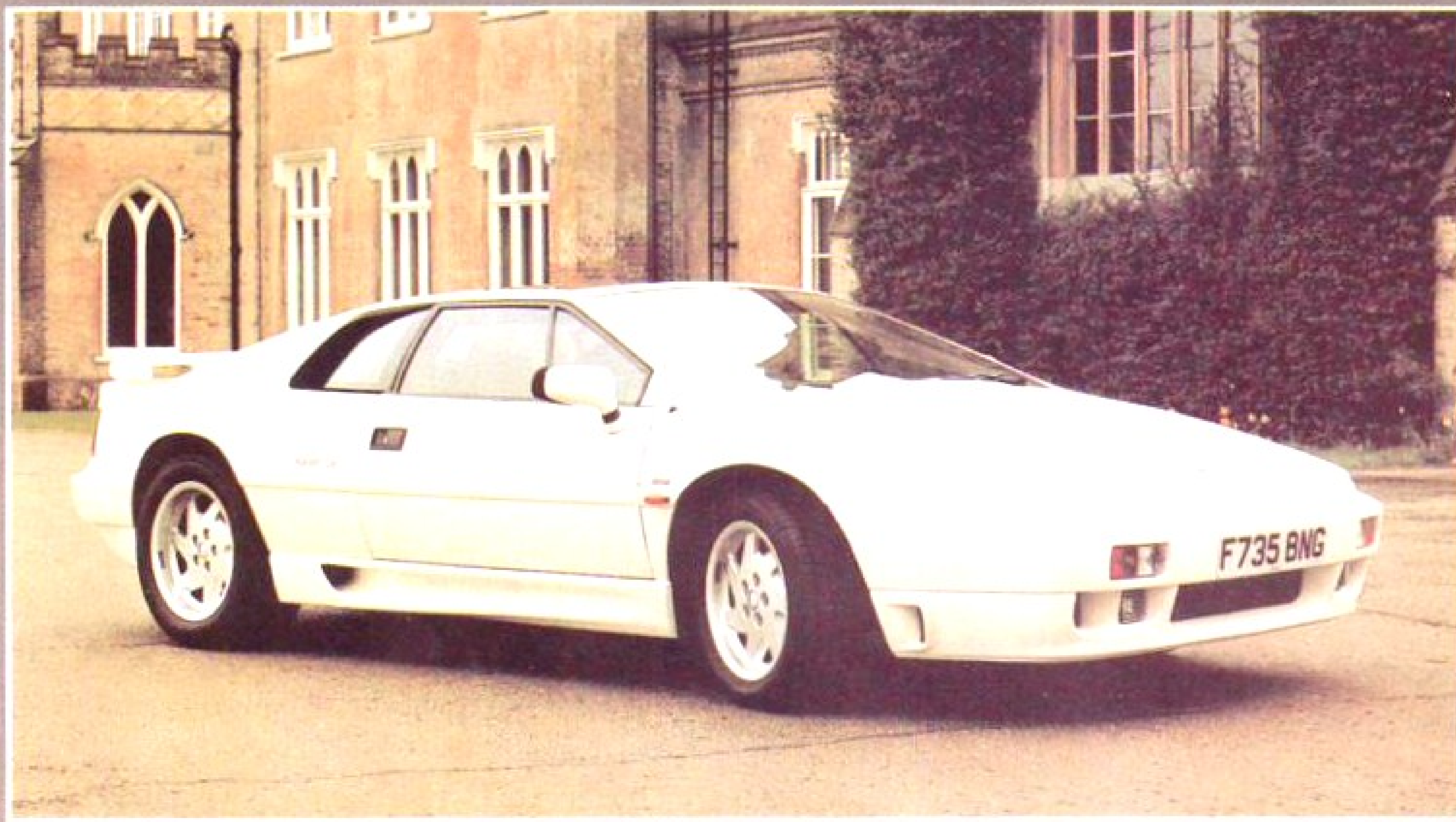
Max power: 264 bhp at 6500 rpm.

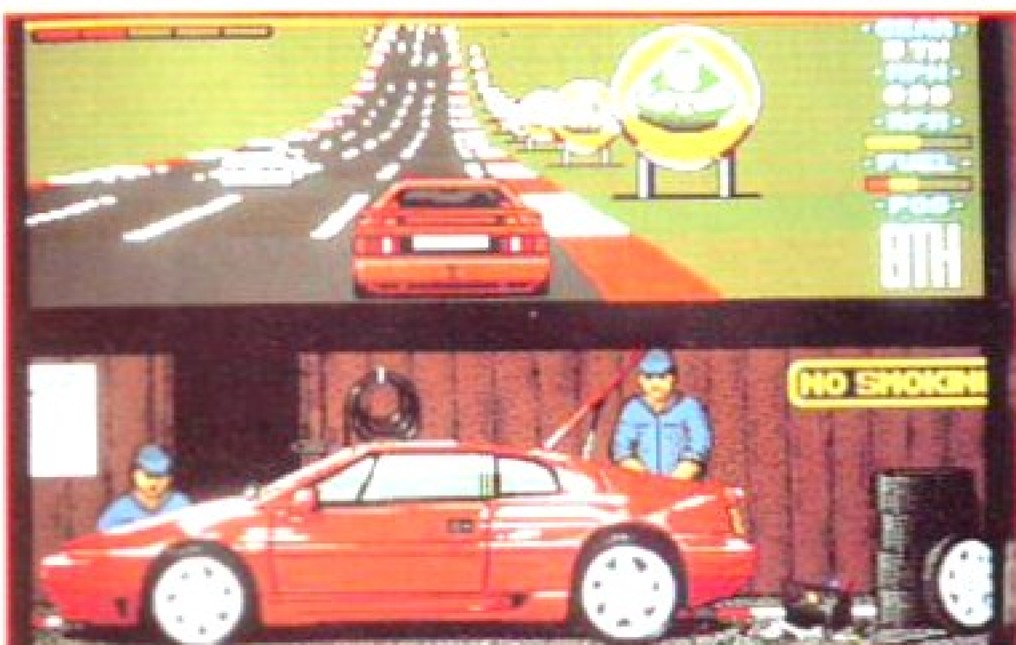
Max torque: 261 lb ft at 3900 rpm.

Max speed: 163 mph.

0-60 mph 4.7 seconds.

0-100 mph 11.9 seconds.





Player One attacks, trying for eighth place while Player Two stops off in the pits for some petrol.



Now, just when you've got the hang of this racing lark they have to put rocks on the road. Not Fair!

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Lotus looks and sounds like the best straight racer ever to hit the strip. The cars are large but move with real speed. 160 mph actually looks like 160 mph, without any loss of control. The split-screen choice is inspired, allowing two drivers to go head-to-head and giving twice as much game without hindering the speed or view. With the action linked by some beautiful incidental screens showing the Lotus in its full glory, *Turbo Esprit Challenge* lives up to its great pedigree.

Sonically the game's no slouch either, offering a choice of in-game music – on the Lotus CD system, naturally. Best of all is the squeal of tyres as you push traction to the limit.

LASTING INTEREST

Most racing games fall down heavily here. Blasting round a track ain't fun for everyone and the novelty wears thin after you've seen the same circuit 58 times. *Lotus* has three levels of actual racing and with each degree of difficulty new tracks are added – easy has seven raceways, medium ten and tough fifteen. To win the entire game you have to score the most points over the fifteen-race 'hard' season, where even seeing the next track is an achievement. Yet even with all this variety, if you don't find high-speed high jinks massively appealing then the game will not weave its spell on you.

JUDGEMENT

Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge is the best racing game yet. In a world filled with *Out Runs* and *Chase HQs* it takes pole position without a doubt. The car itself, in real life, is in a class of its own and the game captures that hand-crafted quality too. It is a complete racing exercise with high-quality sound and pictures: but without the ability to adapt the car, or the curse of permanent crash damage, Lotus remains simply a two player race game. Even so, it's a race game that leaves all comers trailing in its tyre smoke. *Trenton Webb*

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	9
INTELLECT	2
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	89%



James is in trouble on Level 10. He needs to get past that dogfish if he's going to complete the mission. He had better get his 'skates' on if he wants to get out of this 'plaice' 'unbattered'.

JAMES POND
UNDERWATER AGENT

MILLENNIUM £24.99 ■ Joystick

James Pond is a 'lake-onic' secret agent with a 'tail' to tell. 'Pond'-er this, as the world's greatest underwater agent he must 'sea' that the 'scales' of justice are tipped in the good guys' favour. Cool and ef-'fish'-ent, he is licensed to 'gill'. *(Good 'Cod' what a lot of fish jokes – Reader's voice).*

Now Pond faces his greatest challenge yet: 12 missions that would even make a Great White blanch. *A View to a Spill* sets James against oil magnates as he has to plug a leaky pipeline, in *Fishfinger* it's a battle to stop smugglers looting a sunken wreck, while *Orchids are Forever* sees the fearless fish fight the foes of the forests who are foraging for some frightfully fragile flora.

Licence to Bubble is Pond's first mission. Dr Maybe, the world-famous mad, evil, megalomaniac scientist, has imprisoned six of Pond's lobster friends in pots and sent a crack team of restaurateur divers to pluck them up from the sea-bed. James has to set his fishy friends free before the entrées are served.

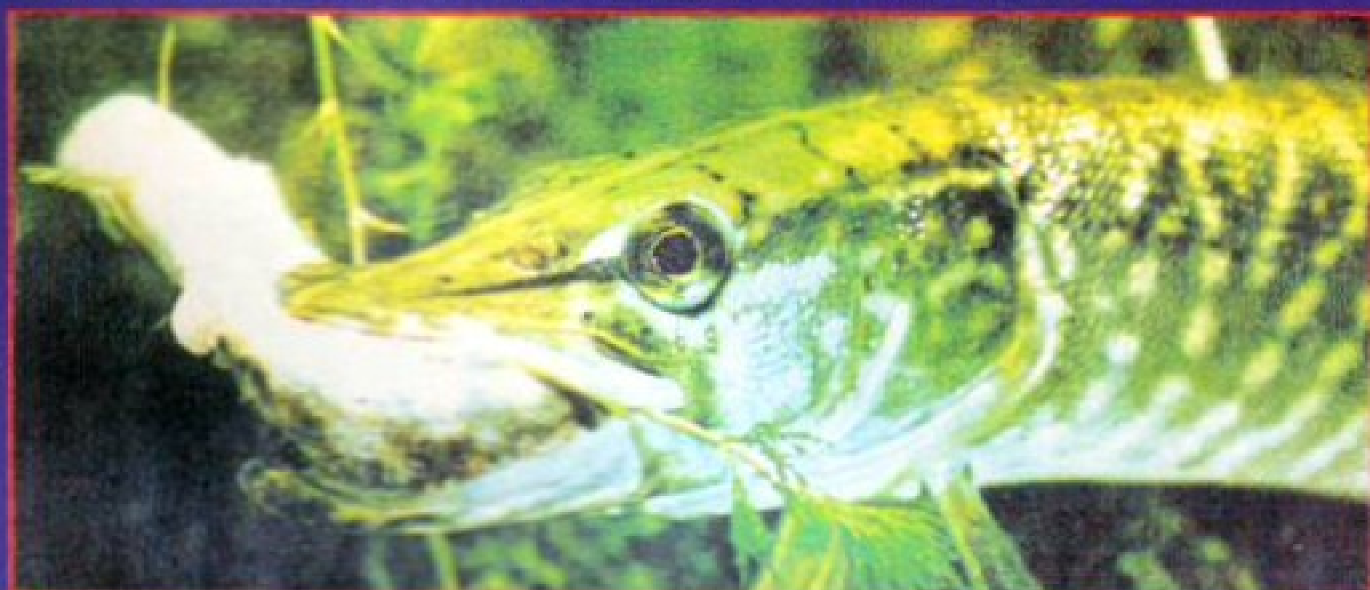
Swimming around this underwater wonderland you'll notice it's full of junk and nasties. The overall playing area is surrounded by cliffs and caves, while the surface has small islands, which house pick-up points. The fish on a mission can swim in all directions and grab objects between his front fins. In this case he's after the keys that will open the door to freedom for his crustacean chums.

James is forever blowing bubbles, which trap his enemies and a quick swish by the fish turns them into collectable point style goodies. The debris that lies on the sea-bed is a treasure trove of trinkets and traps. Most turn into points at the touch of a tailfin but some, especially on the later levels, prove fatal.

The missions have time limits that are generous enough to encourage exploration, which is just as well because there's more to *James Pond* than meets the eye. James can nip home to save special items for use on later missions: there are also three styles of secret caves full of extra points, short cuts to higher levels and more hidden bonus points than it's possible to collect. James Pond will have to 'trawl' every inch of the playing screen if he's going to 'net' even a fraction of the points that need to be 'hauled'.

GREAT FISH OF OUR TIME

Number 12 in an occasional series: ***THE COD***:



Gadus Morhua can be found in both the North Atlantic and the Baltic. Coloured brown with grey spots they can grow up to 1.5m in length and were formerly a staple foodstuff. Overfishing has led to a decline in numbers and an increase in price. Cod are a lonely breed and are renowned for their poor dress sense. The result of this is that they are only ever invited to dinner parties for all the wrong reasons.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

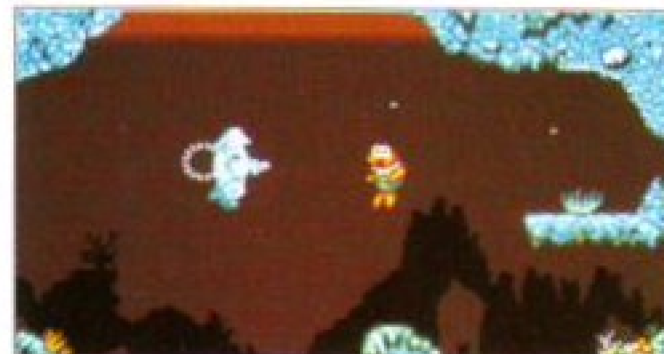
James has style. The backgrounds are a sumptuous blend of coppers that span the spectrum and the sprites are colourful and exceptionally cute. James swims smoothly – except when drunk on Jack Daniels – and picks stuff up with ease. The visuals have the backing of an excellent theme 'tuna' and brilliant underwater effects. Pond is a fish with class and the game shares his sophisticated look.



Home sweet home. James takes an item back so he can use it on a later mission.

LASTING INTEREST

James has 12 levels and the later ones are real sharks. Good players who are dead-dead-good gamers will finish it within weeks. However, Pond has a secret up his scaley sleeve. In the very best *Rainbow Islands* tradition the whole game is littered with secret caves and gameplay touches that will both bemuse and amuse you. In the same way that the graphics have been polished until they shine, the gameplan has been carefully worked, reworked and worked again, so although James doesn't win in terms of the game length stakes, he certainly does in 'depth'.



James's bubbles have no effect on the dreaded pirate ghost. Is his treasure safe? I think not.

JUDGEMENT

James Pond is the first of the Christmas cuties. He looks good, plays well and sounds spiffing too. The cute tone is backed with a sense of fun, which is what it is all about. Gargantuan brain-twisting games have their place, but so do the amusing tests of joystick control. Pond treads that 'fin' line between overt cuteness and tough game design: play it and you're ensured a 'whale' of a time! *Trenton Webb-ed Feet*

GRAPHICS	9
SOUND	9
INTELLECT	4
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	81%

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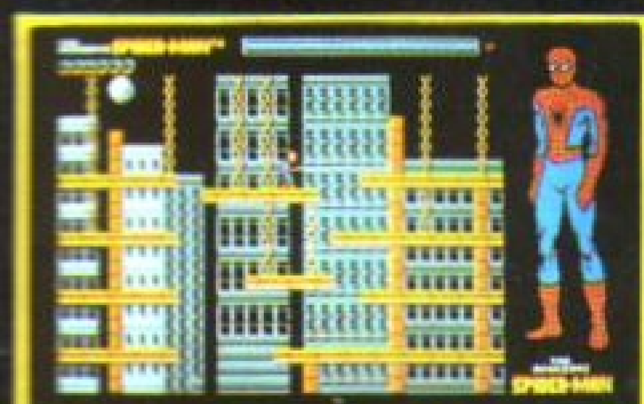
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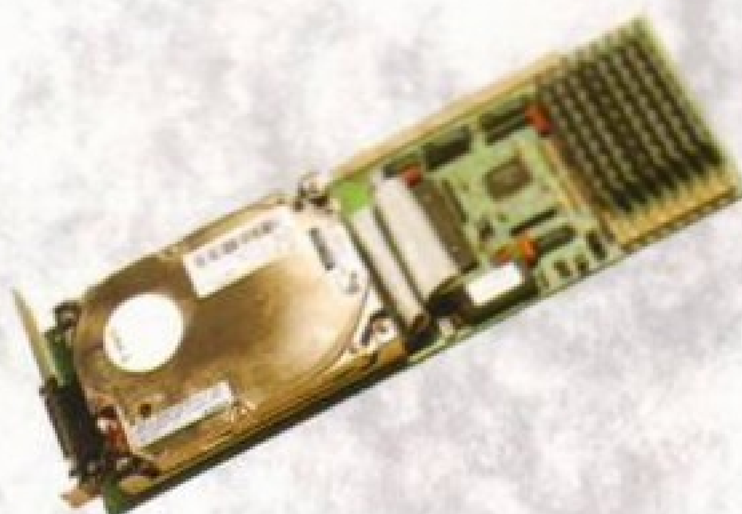
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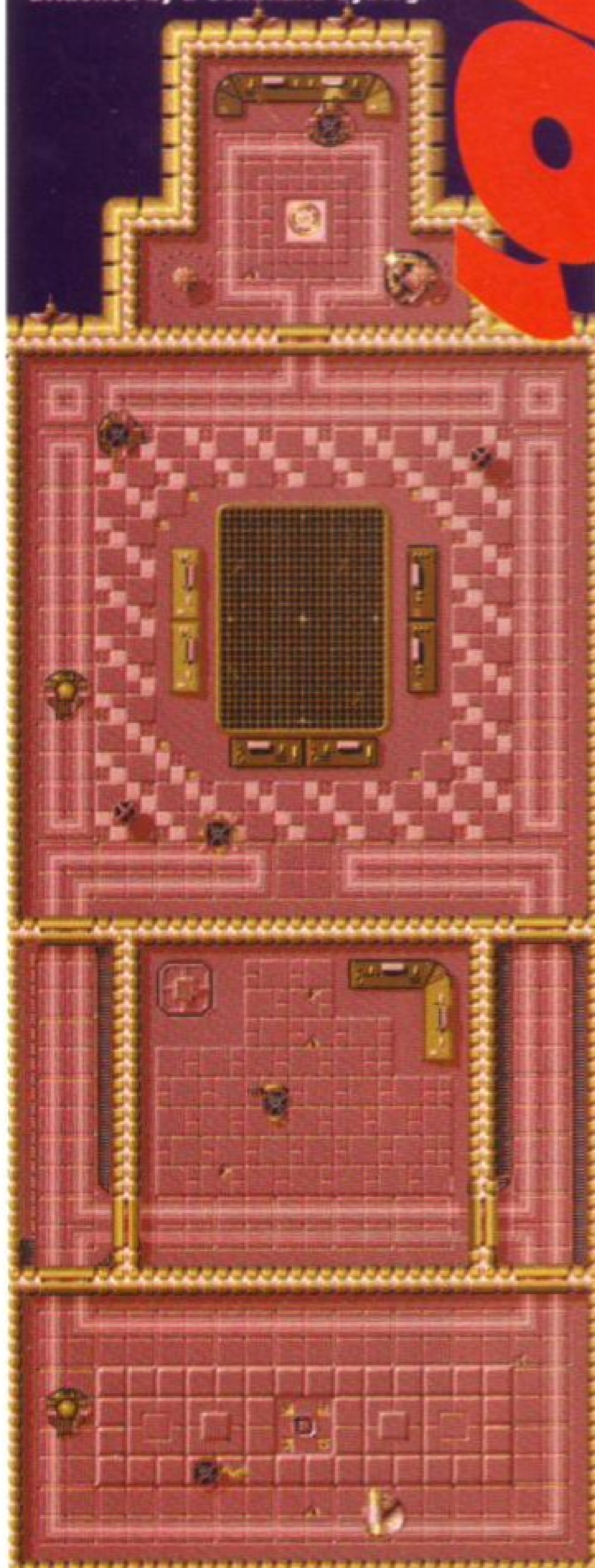
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PARADROID '90

HEWSON £24.99 ■ Joystick



One of the decks of the USF Vigilant. At the bottom is the bare influence device, but moving to the top it gains control of various droids before being attacked by a Command Cyborg.

At the Space Shipping Federation control centre, disturbing things are happening. Over the past few days broken, garbled messages have been coming through from the fleet.

Apparently, a strange force has taken over the systems that control the fleet's droids and has turned them into renegades. The messages speak of ensuing panic as the droids wander the decks, blasting anything that moves. The crew has little chance of survival, but as long as there is still hope something must be done.

A rescue cruiser has been sent out to the fleet in an attempt to try and save any survivors, but primary scans of the ships show that all the crew members are dead. That's not the only problem. The fleet has also been invaded by pirate raiders.

This highly volatile situation means that beaming a standard attack force on board is much too risky, so an alternative plan has been devised. A remote control unit called an Influence Device will be used. The unit can be moved anywhere within the ship, using its on-board laser to destroy droids and raiders. Additionally, any droid can be controlled temporarily by taking over its brain functions, allowing you to take advantage of its improved weapons and armour for a limited period of time.

In order to switch control to another droid, the Influence Device has to battle the host's brain in a 'transfer sequence'. This is in the form of a two-sided circuit, with a column of lights in the centre. The object is to send energy pulses through the circuit to try and turn as much of the central column to your own colour as possible. Success gives you control of the droid, but failure means that you are chucked off your current host and left as an Influence Device. If, however, you aren't controlling a droid, you will be burnt out, thus ending your mission.

If you manage to clear all the decks of droids and raiders, then you can zoom off to a teleporter, ready to take on the next ship.

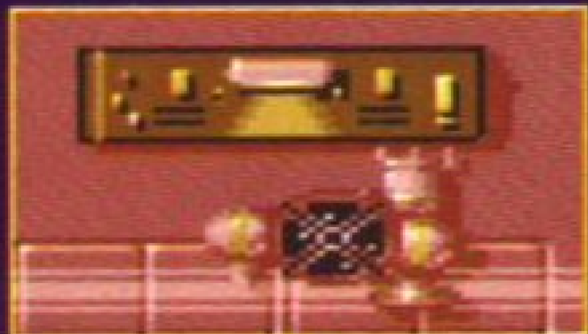
GRAPHICS AND SOUND

The overhead scrolling view employed is strange. You can pass under some of the scenery and the enemies don't appear until you turn a corner! The graphics are very well drawn, with some excellent use of shading to make the droids and decks look suitably hard and metallic. Those of you lucky enough to have one meg of memory – something of a must these days – have the added bonus of an enhanced droid library, with full-colour drawings of the robots along with their data. The sound isn't quite as strong as it could have been, though. The tune and effects sound decidedly weedy at times, rather than having the booming sci-fi feel the game calls for.

LASTING INTEREST

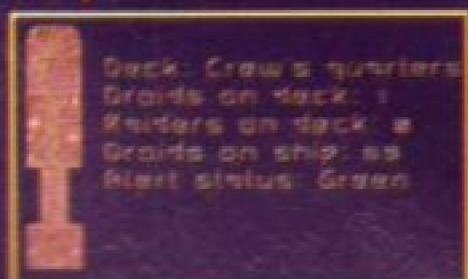
Your first instinct when playing the game is to storm in and blast everything in sight, but it soon becomes clear that all this manages to do is get you dead! Once you've got the grasp of both shooting and transferring, storming through the decks becomes far more fruitful and enjoyable. But even if you manage to clear one ship, there are still more to keep you playing for a while – and they've got vicious pirates on them. Arrgh!

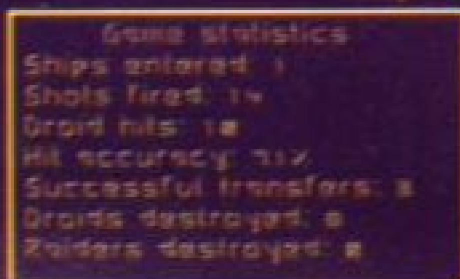
By logging on to a terminal, you can gain access to information about the current ship, a deck map, the droid library and in-game statistics such as transfer successes, kills and hit-rate.



USF Vigilant onboard computer
- Log off
- Ship data
- Deck data
- Droid library
- In-game statistics









JUDGEMENT

On the eight-bit machines it has long been considered a classic game but now, with the extra power of the Amiga, new life has been injected into the game. The pace is more frantic, the game is bigger and the look is more polished, but all the gameplay that made the original a hit has been retained. If you haven't played the game before it may not be what you'd expect from your usual blaster, but have a try and you'll soon see what all the fuss was about. Maff Evans

GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	5
INTELLECT	5
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	88%



The Sun's map. All right, so it's early in the morning and the Sun hasn't quite got around to setting all the pieces of the chart out for you, the fool. So your task is to get hold of the rest of the sections by solving puzzles. Once you've managed to solve all 80, it's time to put the map together because, as you would guess, the sections are as far away from the correct order as possible. Have fun, pals!

The FOOL'S ERRAND

MILES COMPUTING £24.95 ■ Mouse and keyboard

Did you ever invest time and money in one of those puzzle mags which litter the shops at airports and railway stations? Well, this mystical version contains some 80 puzzles with everything the dedicated solvo-freak could wish for, from anagrams and word searches to reflex-testing and code-breaking.

Theoretically at least, there is a plot. There's a bunch of reading to be done but don't skimp on this, otherwise you'll merely find yourself moving from puzzle to puzzle with no rhyme or reason. Not unsurprisingly the story centres upon the fool and his errand.

At the beginning of the game you, the fool, are presented with the Sun's map. The Sun is a tricky chappie and doesn't want you to have all the clues in one go. Unfortunately there are only 21 sections of the map available, they are all in chaos and they mean doodley-squat without the remaining 79. Quite simply, you have to solve 80 puzzles to complete the chart. On completion of each one several others are opened up to you and new pieces of the map come to light.

You can either move through the puzzles in the order in which they appear, or you can use the menu bar, at the top of the screen, to flip between the five sections, each of which contains a number of tricks.

Three of these puzzles really do catch the attention. One should be avoided by anyone who has an adverse reaction to strobe lights, or quick pelican crossings for that matter. It involves chasing numbered squares around the screen and then clicking on them with the mouse pointer.

The second sees you competing with an 'old man' at an arcane game of cards in which the rules are never explained.

The third sees you avoiding the red blob of death as it comes shooting out at you from the hidden recesses of the screen. Again you have to click on it with the pointer. A hint here is to remember the menus.

The other 77 puzzles are a mixture of the absurdly easy – make an anagram from the letters OWOD, fer gawd's sake – to the irritatingly irritating: word searches with vegetables, would you believe. Still, pitching conundrums at a level which everyone will appreciate is a difficult task.

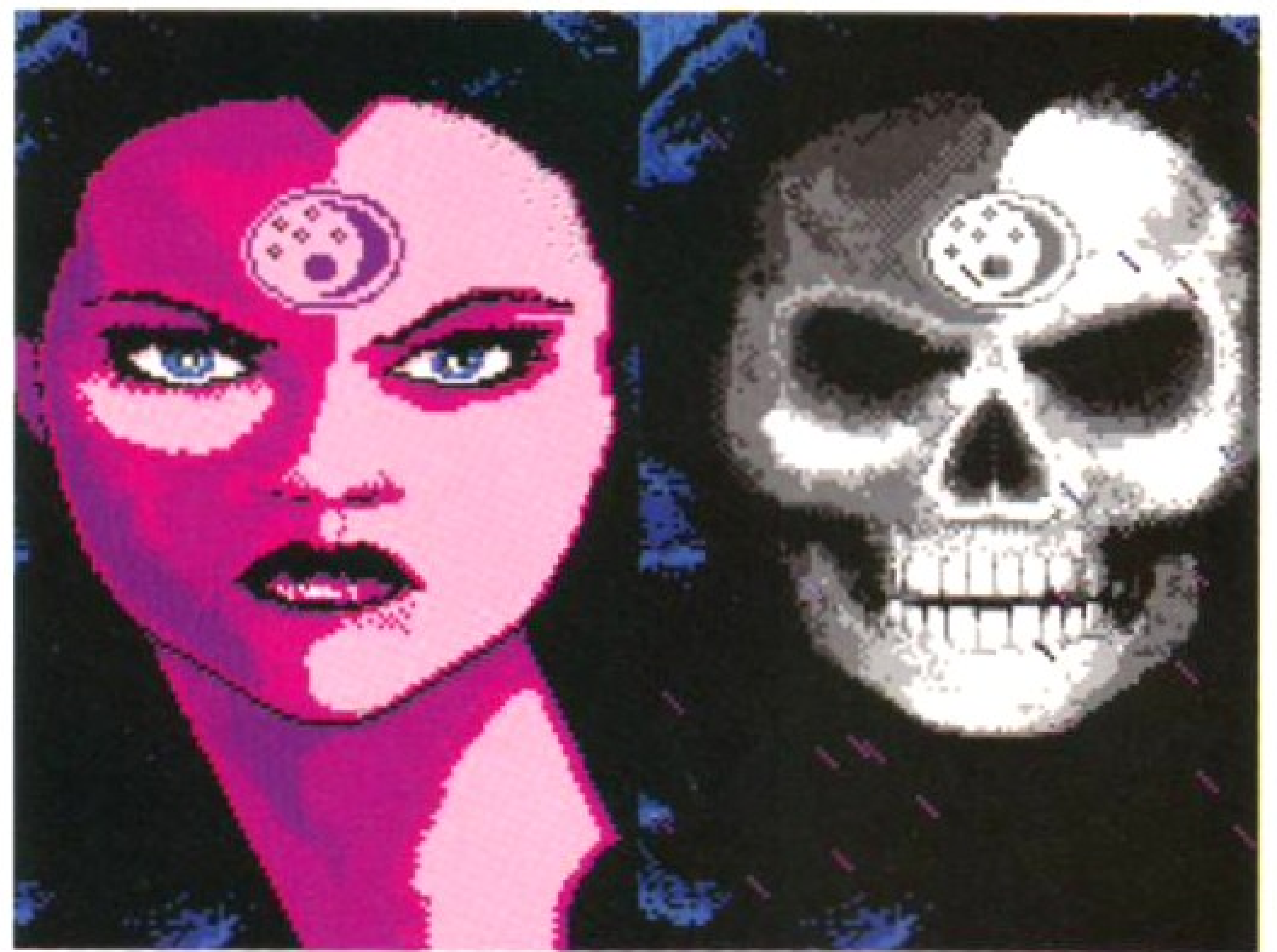
Once you've completed all the tasks and made sense out of the Sun's map you are treated to a lengthy animated end sequence, which chronicles the history of the Fool and gives you a warm tingly feeling inside.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Graphically the game is quite a treat. There are sections which entail rearranging pleasantly drawn pictures from a jumble of constituent parts. Others require the screen to be illuminated with all the colours of the rainbow for no particular reason. As for sound, well that's another story entirely. Dull, dull, dull. Loads of late 1970s beeping and farting with not much else. It's a shame really, because the mediaeval feel of the piece could have benefited quite strongly from some lute music, or even the occasional human voice.

LASTING INTEREST

Once you've cracked the really easy, fairly simple, and reasonably cunning puzzles, which make up 60 per cent of the game, you have two choices: either plough through the word searches and other frustrating outings in order to complete the map; or wait for a torrentially rainy day and get back to them. The game is undoubtedly addictive for the first day or two, after which it begins to wane. Not to be binned, however, as the card game makes an interesting section in itself.



To quote a well-worn cliché of the 90s, "Spooky, or what?" Yes, it's the doomsome pair of Death and his Mrs: or should that be Mrs Death and her Mr? Who knows and only a fool would care. This is a stroke of luck because you are that fool. Not only do you get to meet them both in the opening titles, but they are also integral to a card game which you will have to play along your foolish way.

JUDGEMENT

There is supposed to be an element of strategy to it but this only really becomes apparent after the puzzles are solved. The most positive feature of *The Fool's Errand* is the sheer number and variety of the puzzles. Get some mates round for the evening and see if you can crack it in one go. Aside from some qualms about the thin graphics and sound, the game is an intelligent use of the machine and should fire the imagination of any seasoned adventurer or student of the not-quite-so-straightforward in life. Tim Smith

GRAPHICS	6
SOUND	3
INTELLECT	8
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	70%

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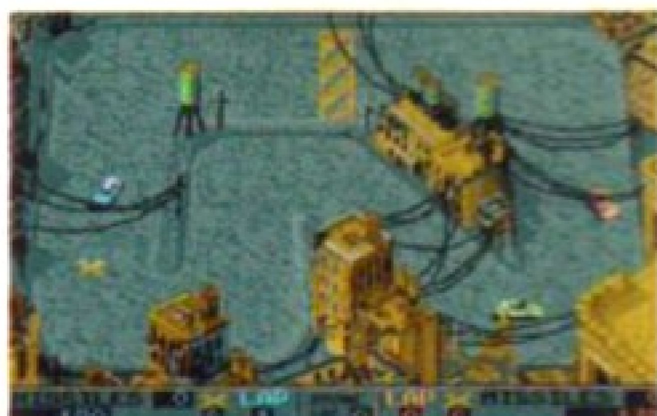
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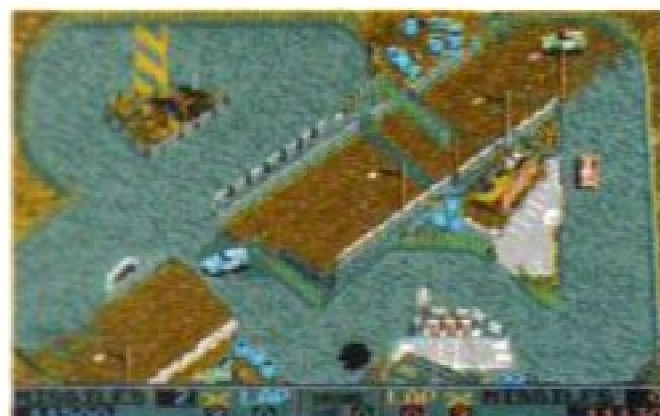
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You're racing around an oil refinery. The red car's about to collect a spanner. This can be spent on missiles or turbos. Anything, in fact, to make your car faster and more dangerous than the others.

DOMARK £19.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

BADLANDS

Once again, nuclear war has broken out. The planet Earth is trashed. Staying alive has become the ultimate struggle. But the Badlands survivors can't be bothered with finding sufficient food and shelter to enable them to continue the human race. Instead they build very powerful and dangerous cars, take them to hazardous racing circuits and use them to try to kill each other.

There are eight of these perilous circuits bulldozed through the Badlands, the derelict remains of the previous civilisation. Each circuit can have eight hideously blasted backgrounds. Not the sort of place you'd let your kids romp around after dark.

The first circuit is right in the wasted heart of the city. The three competing cars line up, waiting for the off. Suddenly the race is under way. Full power sends you skidding into the first bend. You avoid the oil spills on the course, only to slide into live electrical cables which have fallen into your path. You grind to a halt as your enemies stream past. Open fire with the roof-mounted cannon (fitted as standard) and you might still be in with a chance!

Either one or two players may participate, with the other car(s) being controlled by the computer. You can select the joystick configuration that you prefer: the fire button can either be used to loose off weaponry, or to accelerate. You can, of course, opt for keyboard control instead.

Each race is over four laps and you must collect the spanner symbols which appear around the track. These are also the prizes awarded to the winner and runner-up. Collect enough, and you can afford the optional extras to enhance your vehicle. Guided missiles come in packs of four; they



destroy any car within range, forcing a new one to be airlifted in to where the old one died. This takes valuable seconds, giving everyone else an advantage. Shields can, however, be purchased. These are temporarily impervious to missiles.

Other equipment enhances the performance of your set of wheels. Speed boost, new tyres and turbos all enable you to burn past those which you haven't already destroyed.

The next circuit is an oil refinery. Using your weapons here might cause fires of Red Adair proportions, so be careful. If you survive, you'll get to race around a volcano, a military compound and even a prison. All have unique and rather nasty hazards.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Each course fits onto one screen, so many of the graphics are small. The cars look (and act) like little cartoons as they bounce around. Everything is smooth, however, and there are nice spot-effects for explosions, obstacles and so on. There is little in the way of post-holocaust atmosphere, though: it all seems rather jolly.

Sound is fine. A tense little tune attempts to remind you of the recent fate of mankind. The sounds of weaponry unleashed are OK, and enhance the cartoon feeling surrounding the game. The sonics don't detract from the gameplay, but don't add a great deal either.

LASTING INTEREST

Each new circuit poses its own hazards, and your opponents often take some beating, so there is instant addictiveness. However, once you have seen the courses and survived, there is nothing else to do except go round again. On later levels the computer cars speed up to Senna-like velocities, making it virtually impossible to win, even with missiles.

Racing a flesh-and-blood opponent is more satisfying, as it can develop (or degenerate) into static warfare. But ultimately this too is of limited enjoyment.

JUDGEMENT

This form of highly dangerous sprint-racing in an (irrelevantly) radiation-blasted world is addictive and fun once you start to win. But, further on, when you start to lose, and when all the circuits start to look the same, you find the thrill palling somewhat. There isn't that much gear you can buy for the car, so you don't really progress: you just try to keep surviving through to the next race. *Badlands* is quite a fun little arcade game, but, unfortunately, has a rather short half-life. There just isn't enough variety. James Leach

GRAPHICS	5
SOUND	5
INTELLECT	3
ADDICTION	4
OVERALL	46%



Billy normally uses his torch to kill the Gremlins by exposure to 'Bright light'. If the going gets really tough, though, he can call on the Rambo Gizmo for aid by collecting an 'R' token.

GREMLINS II

ELITE £24.99 ■ Joystick and Keyboard

Mogwai don't get mad, they get silly. Way back in the mists of time (1984!) the lovable rogues terrorised a town after getting wet and turning into Gremlins. Gizmo (hurrah!), the original Mogwai from whence the Gremlins sprang, has now been captured by an evil scientist (boo!) and – guess what? He's been and gawn and got soaked once more (gasp!) The only hope is to collect the five parts of Gizmo's magic box, which could just save the day.

Now Billy (yipee!), the human hero of the first outing, has to stop the Grems overrunning a shopping mall. Using a torch (bright light!) he has to clear the place store by store. Dashing horizontally about each floor, picking up different weapons (tomatoes, frisbees and phones), he must clear a path to the next lift, leaping on desks, filing cabinets and platforms to avoid the Gremlins' attacks.

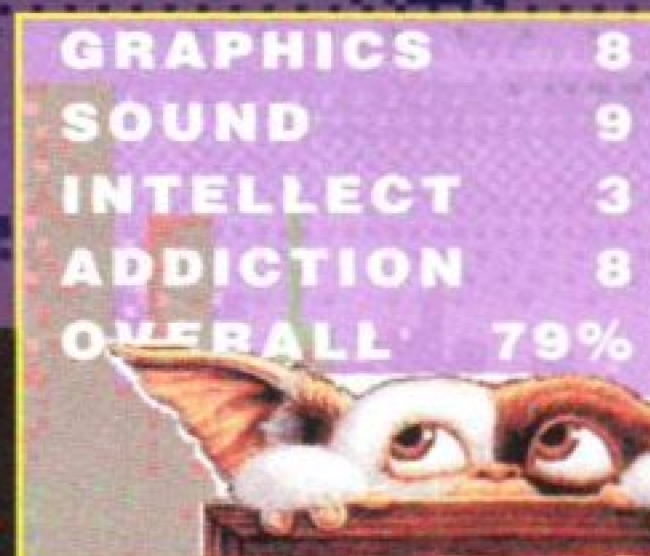
The Gremlins are wild, wicked and witty. Once they have finished ransacking the shopping mall they have masses of death-dealing tricks up their furry sleeves. Skateboarders, rocket riders, pogostickers, jetpackers and bomb throwers are just some of the creatures that are both hilarious and invariably fatal.



Run away, there's Mohawk! The Gremlins' leader!



Part one of Gizmo's box is in the bag: four more to go.



GRAPHICS	8
SOUND	9
INTELLECT	3
ADDICTION	8
OVERALL	79%

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Sound effects rarely make a game but the Gremlins' giggles lift it gloriously. Deaths are accompanied with a growled "Bye bye, Billy!" and a chorus of evil laughter. Backing up the realistic Gremmo tittering are some brilliant Gremlin sprites, they actually look real. They move in mischievous ways, which makes up for the functional scenery, supplying an eye-catching focus for the game.

Gremlins has one major graphic fault, a flick-scroll system that irritates in the way only flick screens can. The screen can be clear of critters, with Billy one pixel away from the edge of the screen, when a Gremlin decides to bounce on. The result is a death that you could not foresee or avoid, which makes the game considerably harder and massively more frustrating.

LASTING INTEREST

Killing Gremlins is hard going. They are unpredictable little tykes who always home in on Billy. The toughness of the gameplay and the clumsiness of the scrolling combine to make collecting the five parts of Gizmo's box, each of which lives on its own level, a practical impossibility. It's fun but too frustrating, especially as they keep laughing at your every mistake!

JUDGEMENT

Spot on in both the graphic and sound departments. The Grems translate perfectly into sprites and their anarchic antics are amusing and annoying. Elite may have fallen victim to a Gremlin themselves because it's way too tough, protecting the Gremlins from Billy's bright light forever.

Trenton Webb

MANNIX

MILLENNIUM £24.99 ■ Joystick or keyboard

The world's gone mad. All the neatly-trimmed lawns have turned funny colours, the duck pond has become toxic and bombs are falling out of the sky. Filbert, our yellow blobby hero, must bounce around putting every square foot of turf back the way it ought to be – namely green.

The gardens are isometric 3D areas cut up into small screen-sized blocks. You play screen by screen, bouncing on the squares to make them revert one stage closer to normal. Some patches may take multiple bounces to clean up, others take just one.

The tricky bit is controlling the bounce of our Fil' and working out which of the bits that drop from the sky are a help: cups of tea, for example, make everything seem all right, while both the Ninja and Viking Warrior chaps are an obvious danger.



Filbert gets mad when his garden goes from green to wierd. Now he must bounce on each and every patch to get it back to normal.

Mannix can be a puzzle game, a two-player competition or an ongoing challenge to clean up the whole garden. There are 128 different screens to clean, plus a variety of soundtracks and a customise option. It's a diverting game but never really captures that mad addictive hook alluded to in the title, which is a shame – young Filbert certainly has promise, but he doesn't really shine.

Trenton Webb

GRAPHICS 7 / SOUND 7 / INTELLECT 5 / ADDICTION 4 / OVERALL 69%

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The USS Kidd sails straight for your submarine. The guns are loaded, the torpedoes are ready and the battleship looks set for a scrap metal course. There's always the problem of hitting the damned thing though, it may be big but it's moving. Act now or you're sunk!

WOLFPACK

MIRRORSOFT ■ £24.99 Mouse or keyboard

When the Kriegsmarine U-boats prowled the seas during World War II, they hunted like a wolfpack. Attacking in waves, they would first wound and then sink their prey. By interrupting the flow of materials vital to the war effort, U-boats sought to siege Britain into submission.

For submarine captains this was the 'Happy Time' when convoys provided easy pickings and the 'Wolves' ruled the waves. After D-Day the introduction of sonar and radar systems forced a change of tactics and the packs started hitting military targets, often at the cost of their own lives.

Submarine warfare is a game of cat-and-mouse played with 1000-ton ships. In *Wolfpack* you can take command of either the ships or the U-boats. The submarines must second guess the surface shipping's every move and set up ambushes. The surface ships must anticipate the submariners and either flee or fight. As commander of the sub, you must use your vessel's limited capabilities – which vary as the war continues – to maximum effect. Surface ships' captains use new technology, improving weaponry and their knowledge of sub formations to keep the Wolves away from the civilian ships.

Each battle is fought as an individual scenario. Victories for the Allies are scored when the convoy reaches its destination or the time limit expires. The U-boats win by sinking at least 50% of the ships. The odds may seem stacked against the submariners, but they always strike first.

A strategy element is added to the simulation with each commander having control over a number of vessels, rather than being stuck with just the one. The ships in your charge run on preselected orders, which they follow until you take the bridge. Submarines with a human at the helm can sneak in for a torpedo shot or surface for a pop with the deck cannon. Drone submariness can only anchor, patrol and shadow the convoy. Some commands, though, may be disobeyed by the occasional computer captain if a ship makes itself a target. Surface shipping has a similar limited list of 'group commands', the brevity of which actually helps make the larger convoys manageable. The only orders that seem to be disobeyed is sinking without permission!

Over a series of preset missions commanders can explore the possibilities of underwater warfare, with the chance to play both the hunter and the hunted. After these have been beaten it's time to delve into the construction set and build some serious scenarios. Using the parameters explored in the pre-set modules you can build stupid one-sided battles that would test the mettle of the best. It even allows for duels between two captains, with one hunting the other on the open seas.

GRAPHICS AND SOUND

Clear and easily-accessed controls are vital if a sim is to succeed. In *Wolfpack* all the commands are clicked onto the various dials and gauges. Once you're used to their positioning, orders can be sent far faster than it's possible for the ships to respond. The window on the world, which represents a periscope view, is small but clear enough for lining up shots. Stirring music introduces *Wolfpack*, the kind of tune that accompanies all those xenophobic war movies, setting the scene perfectly for some 'Jerry' or 'Tommy' bashing.

LASTING INTEREST

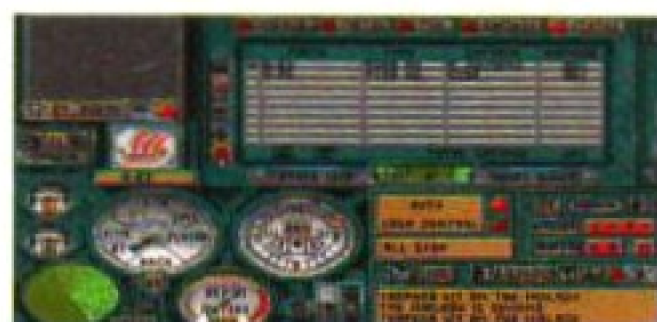
The limited number of preset missions shouldn't be used as a measure of *Wolfpack's* depth. Most of the gameplay parameters are touched upon in these ready-built missions, but are far from fully explored. As trainers, the 'ready to run' modules are complex enough to teach the basics of naval war, yet playable enough to be fun. Even when the tactics become obvious, there's always the tricky task of implementing them.

JUDGEMENT

Submarine sims will always be curious beasts as they lack the gut-wrenching sensations associated with flying or driving. The hunting is tough enough to stop players destroying the cream of the Allied navies first time out, but with practice it is distinctly possible. Luckily *Wolfpack* is free from the technophile tendencies that sinks so many simulators, where gameplay is sacrificed to absolute accuracy. *Wolfpack*, quite correctly, uses the multiple ship strategy elements to supplement its gameplay quotient and is not an in-depth investigation of WW II diesel engines. The sub simulator itself is strong enough to justify the game and the strategy is an excellent second string to its bow. Trenton Webb



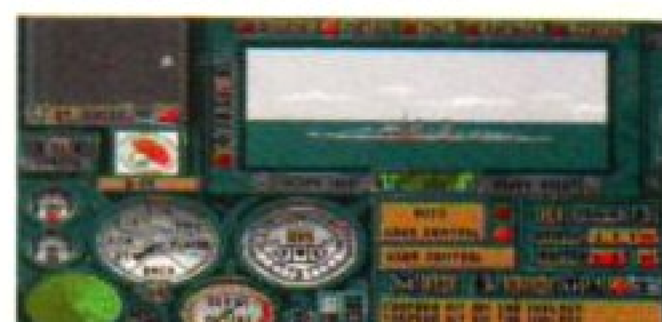
The Kidd takes a direct hit. Pass the Schnapps Fritz, Ach Schnell, Got in Himmel, Achtung... and other great lines from Warlord Comics.



"Both subs running and ready to patrol, Herr Kaptan!"



Check out your tub with a quick-glance at the damage chart



Another victim for the *WolfPack*, that is if they don't mind.

GRAPHICS	7
SOUND	6
INTELLECT	9
ADDICTION	7
OVERALL	83%

ON YOUR DISK

ULTIMATE RIDE

he fastest, smoothest bike game in a long me. Can't wait until Mindscape get the nished copy with all the courses and bikes ver from the States? Try it here first...

HUMANS SAMPLER

eal Things specialise in producing high-uality animations. If you own *Deluxe Paint I*, you'll find this quite an eye-opener when reating your very own animations.

HISOFT BASIC EDITOR

you've never got on with *Ed*, the text ditor that comes with the Amiga, you'll find is very useful for writing and editing text les. It's just a sample of the power of iSoft's Basic tools.

PERSONAL FINANCE MANAGER

elps keep track on expenditure and may st convince you that recording your debits nd credits is a good idea.

SEARCH

conjunction with his feature on migaDOS directories on Page 209, Paul eraa boldly goes where no Dir command as gone before.

ERR

hat's up, Doc? Not too sure of what all ose Lattice C error messages mean? This ould help and might speed up your devel-pment time considerably.

PIC OF THE MONTH

ay-tracing strikes again, with a hi-res HAM icture that will amaze you with its quality.

GETTING STARTED

e *Ultimate Ride* playable game demo is lf-booting: all you have to do is turn off e machine, insert the Coverdisk and itch on. If only it could all be that simple! get to the rest of the programs on the verdisk, you will have to load in your orkbench disk first. For readers with one ive disk-swapping has been kept to a inimum and generally isn't necessary ter a program has finished loading.

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DON'T KNOW HOW? SEE P 105 FAST! ENSURE YOU WRITE-PROTECT YOUR DISK BEFORE USE!

DISK EXTRA

From motorbikes to moving men, from programming in Basic to personal finance, this month's Coverdisk is packed with 880K of variety. PAT McDONALD is your techie-inclined guide to the goodies.

ULTIMATE RIDE

PROGRAM: MINDSCAPE, FILES: FAR TOO MANY TO LIST!

Grab your leather and your lid, press the starter and ride free! This is a sneak preview of a real big biker's game, which eventually will feature lots of different bikes, circuits and features.

On booting, the program will display a few screens showing the options of the full game. Only when a rider's view is displayed can you start doing things – it's a race on British roads with typical countryside hazards astride a Yamaha FZR400.

Controls are easy – just push the joystick forwards to accelerate, pull back to brake and tilt to lean the bike around the corners. Be warned that staying at 183 MPH cuts down on manouevrability and you really do have to ride the machine properly.

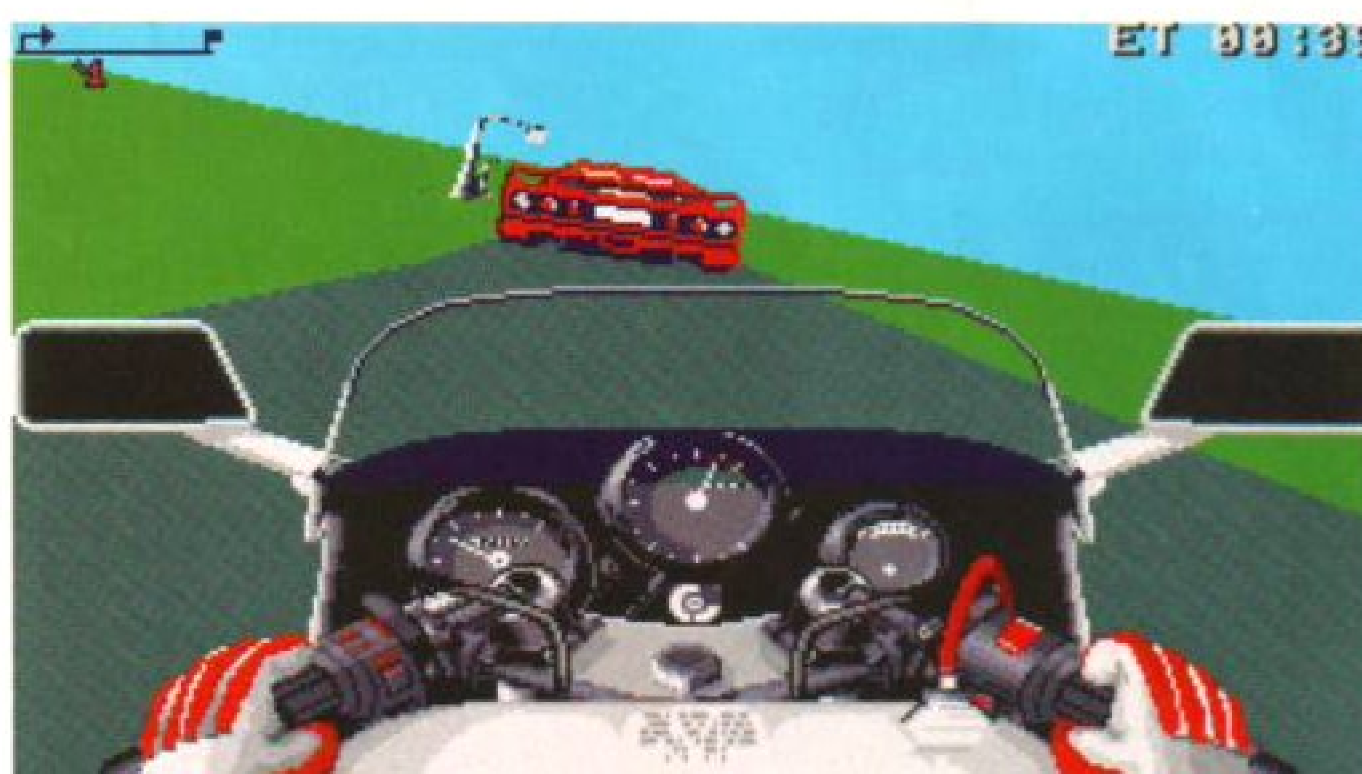
Don't be surprised if you encounter a flashy sports car – them trendies get everywhere. Just lean a little, hit the throttle and watch them disappear on your rear-view mirrors.

Remember, you are riding on the country roads of our own Sceptred Isle, so quite apart from the twist and turns and ups and downs of the landscape you will also have to avoid the sheep and cows that have an unpleasant tendency to wander onto the roadway. Go carefully!





The Yamaha FZR 400, all ready to road-race.



Boy racer watch out – Mad McDonald's about!



The full game will feature six different motorcycles.

HUMANS SAMPLER

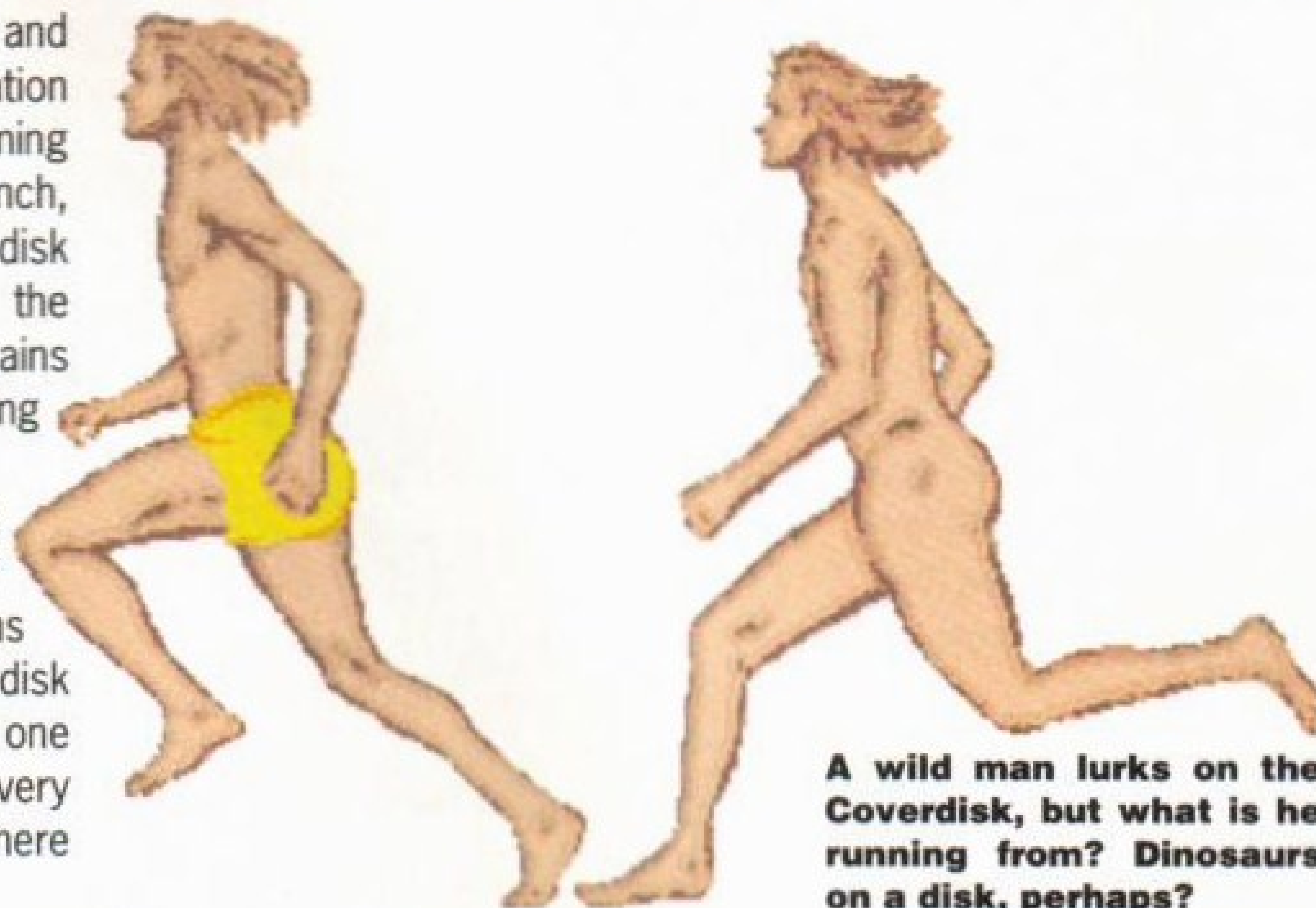
PROGRAM: RGB STUDIOS FILES: 1.WILDMAN.ANIM, 2.SHORTS.ABR, 3.NEWHEAD.ABR, 4.RE-HEADING.PIC, 5.BROLLYBITS.PIC, 6.STREETSCROLL.ABR, 7.BUS.BR, REALTHINGS.DOC, REALTHINGS.DOC.INFO

Okay, okay, so this is only any good if you've got *Deluxe Paint III*. However, it's a very intriguing set of files that might get you to dust off an unused paint package and start using it to create your own animations. The IFF files could be used in other paint programs.

The first thing to do is load *Deluxe Paint III*. Select the lowest resolution with 16 colours. Then go to the ANIM menu, and then load 1.wildman.anim from the Coverdisk. After it's loaded, press the number [4] key at the top of the keyboard (not F4) and you'll see him jogging merrily along.

If you're impressed with that and would like to see the animation transformed into a man running after a bus, load up Workbench, put your Coverdisk into any disk drive and double-click on the realthings.doc icon. This contains a complete tutorial on loading the extra files into *DPIII*.

Please note: since we have a very limited amount of space, there isn't a 'Humans Sampler' drawer on the Coverdisk – all the Coverdisk files are in one big directory, along with every other file. Apologies, but there was very little alternative.



A wild man lurks on the Coverdisk, but what is he running from? Dinosaurs on a disk, perhaps?

PERSONAL FINANCE MANAGER

PROGRAM: MICRODEAL FILES: PFM.DEMO, PFM.DEMO.INFO, PFM_README, PFM_README.INFO, EXAMPLE.MNY

Personal Finance Manager is a new kind of database program specially created to handle personal bank accounts, savings accounts, credit card transactions and many other similar applications. Standing Orders are automatically posted to your account without you having to remember them and you can create over 100 budgets, for evaluation with instant graphical reports.

When it's time to check *PFM* against an official statement, it will even work out which transactions have not yet cleared. In short, *PFM* takes the hard work out of managing your accounts. You enter the data, *PFM* does the rest.

The demo on this disk has been created to give you a flavour of *PFM*. What follows is necessarily a brief tutorial with extracts from the manual. For the full explanation of the program's features and procedures, refer to the product manual. To get into the program as quickly as possible, follow these instructions:

1: Run *PFM* and click [OK] in the credits box.

2: Confirm the system date with [OK] or enter your own, then [OK].

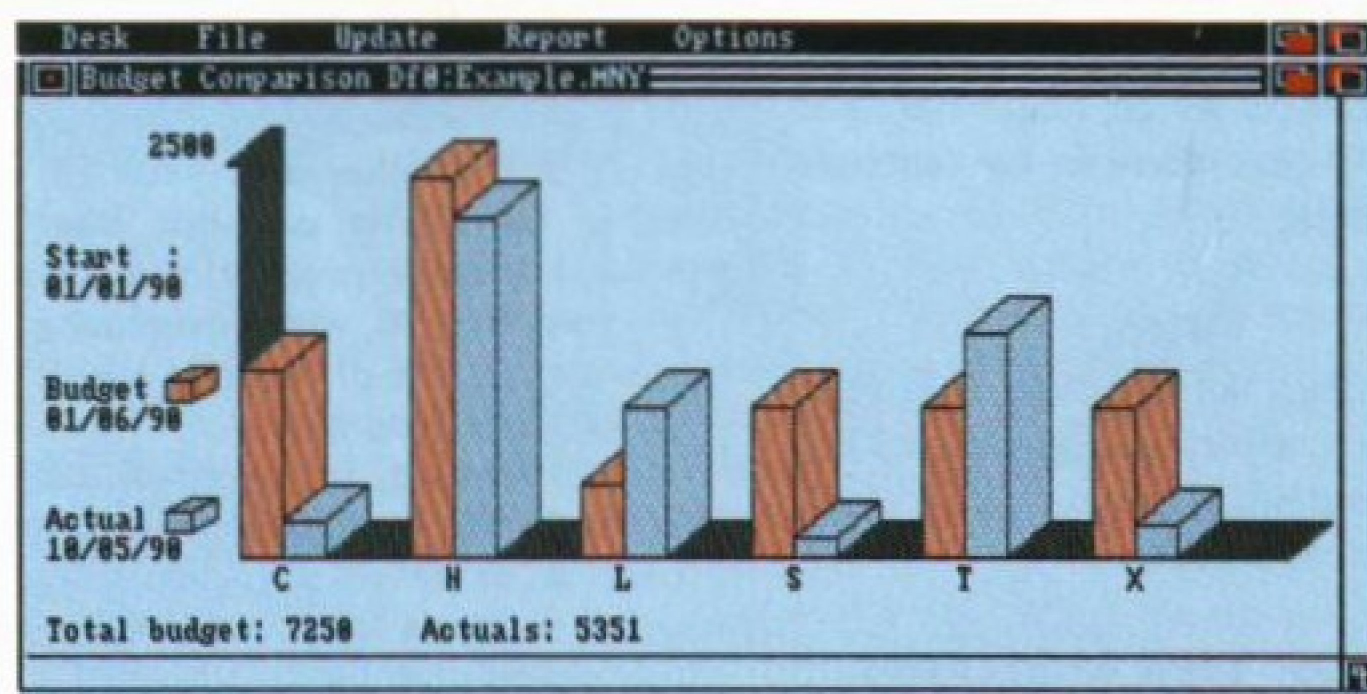
3: Double-click on "Example.MNY" in the file selector box.

4: Select 'Budget Comparison' from the REPORT menu and then decrease the size of the resulting window to gain some space.

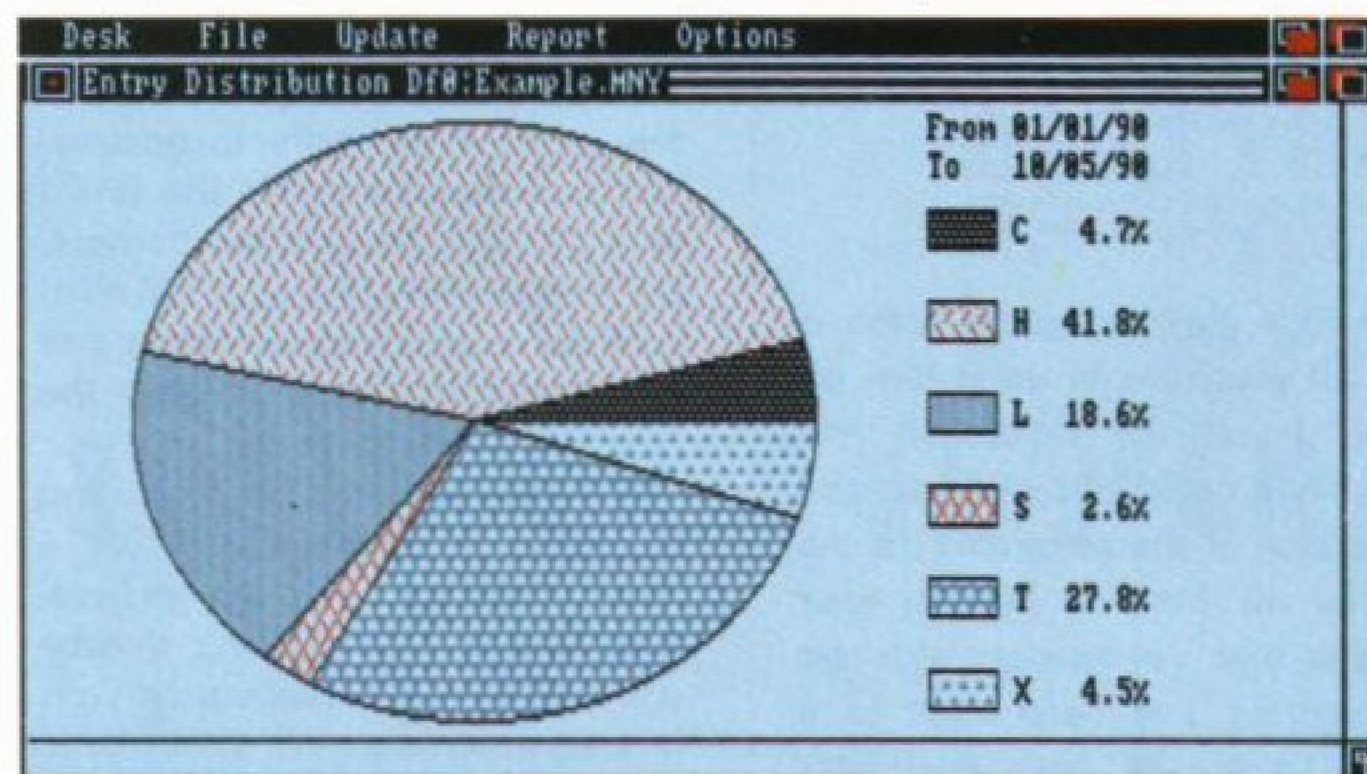
5: Select 'Entry Distribution' from the REPORT menu. Decrease and move this window too.

6: Select 'Balance Plot' from the REPORT menu. Ditto.

For this and lots more information on how to get the best out of the demo, plus more information on the full-sized product, take a look at the readme file on the disk. It's very comprehensive indeed. The curious might also wish to see the full review of *PFM* on Page 219.



A budget comparison to see where the money is distributed.



Entry distribution is for ironing out the highs and lows in your budget.

SEARCH

AUTHOR: PAUL OVERAA FILES: SEARCH, SEARCH.C, SEARCH_README, SEARCH_README.INFO

Wassis then? There's no icon for it, which means that you have to use it from the dreaded CLI or Shell. But that's on a Workbench disk! Yep, you've guessed it, no space for a CLI on the Coverdisk, so the first thing you have to do is copy it onto a Workbench disk.

But what is it? *Search* is a very clever recursive C program (the source code for it is the file Search.c, for curious readers and programmer types). It searches through disks for particular kinds of data files, namely graphics or sounds files. This is very handy for finding files that you know are on disks, but are hidden in some obscure directory.

Right, so how about copying it onto a Workbench disk – not the original, just a working copy of Workbench? Go into the CLI (click on the Workbench1.3 icon, click on the system drawer, and there's the CLI) and type:

```
COPY FROM COVERDISK 17:SEARCH
TO WORKBENCH1.3:c
```

The drive will spin, a requester for the Coverdisk will appear. Pop the Coverdisk in the drive (any drive if you have more than one) and the file will be read. Put your Workbench disk back in when requested, and the program will be placed in the c directory, where all the CLI commands live.

Search looks for MIDI files and a number of common IFF file types (ILBM pictures, 8SVX sound samples, SMUS files etc). To use it just type SEARCH followed by the disk drive to be looked at. SEARCH DF0:, for example will search drive zero, the internal drive of an A500.

If you are searching a hard disk, or even a floppy with many files and nested directories, then *Search* may take a minute or two, but it'll be a lot quicker than any other method! Redirect the output to a disk file if you happen to need a permanent copy:

SEARCH >RAM:output DF0:

This will send the results to a ramdisk file called 'output'.

More information on what *Search* is and does can be found in the piece on Page 209.

BASIC EDITOR

PROGRAM: HISOFT FILES: POWER BASIC, POWER BASIC.INFO, READ.ME, READ.ME.INFO, PBASIC.INF

This is a demo version of the editor included with Power Basic. Thefull version of Power Basic gives a fully integrated editing and compilation environment. The compiler is invoked by selecting 'compile' from the program menu. After the compilation, any errors which occured are reported back to the editor, so that each one may be corrected simply by pressing Amiga-J or selecting 'Jump to Error' from the Program menu.

The editor is easy to use, with many commands, including:

Cursor commands:

Use the cursor to move about your document wherever you desire
Page up – Ctrl-R or Shift-up arrow
Page down – Ctrl-C or Shift-down arrow
Word left – Shift-left arrow
Word right – Shift-right arrow
Goto start of line – Ctrl-left arrow
Goto end of line – Ctrl-right arrow
Goto top of file – Right-Amiga-T
Goto end of file – Right-Amiga-B
Goto to a line – Right-Amiga-G

Delete Commands:

Delete line – Ctrl-Y
UnDelete line – Ctrl-U
Delete to end of line – Ctrl-Q
Delete all text – New from Project menu

Block Commands:

Begin block – F1
End block – F2
Save block – F3
Copy block – F4
Delete block – Shift-F3
Paste block – F5
Remember block – Shift-F4
Print block – Right-Amiga-W

Disk Commands:

Load text – Right-Amiga-L
Save text as – Right-Amiga-S
Save text – Shift-right-Amiga-S
Insert text – Right-Amiga-I

Search & Replace:

Search – Right-Amiga-F
Replace – Right-Amiga-R
Find next – Right-Amiga-N
Find previous – Right-Amiga-P

Miscellaneous

Preferences command – Preferences from Options menu
Tab setting – Set tab spacing
Text buffer size – Maximum text buffer size
Backups – Selects whether backups are made
Auto indent – Auto-indentation mode
End of line – Cursor wraps/stops at end of line
Auto full size – Window is auto-opened full size when started
Save – Save preferences to disk

ERR

AUTHOR: BRIAN COBURN (QAC)
FILES: ERR, ERR.DOC, ERR.DOC.INFO

This is one for the techies or even, to be yet more precise, techies who program using Lattice C. There's no icon for it, because it's not usable as is – it needs to be copied onto a Lattice C work disk. Right, over to you Brian – in your own words, in your own time...

"First thing is to place this program on your Lattice C working disk in the C directory where it can be called as a standard CLI command. To use the command type ERR (#opt),(#opt),(#opt) where each option (opt) stated is a number between 1 and 94 separated by a comma, ie: ERR 1,2,3 which will give the result of displaying the errors 1, 2 and 3 from the Lattice manual. On the CLI screen you can, of course, use only one or two options with the same results.

"I have kept the description of the errors as they come in the Lattice C Manual. If you make an error in typing or used the standard question mark (?), the program will give you the usage.

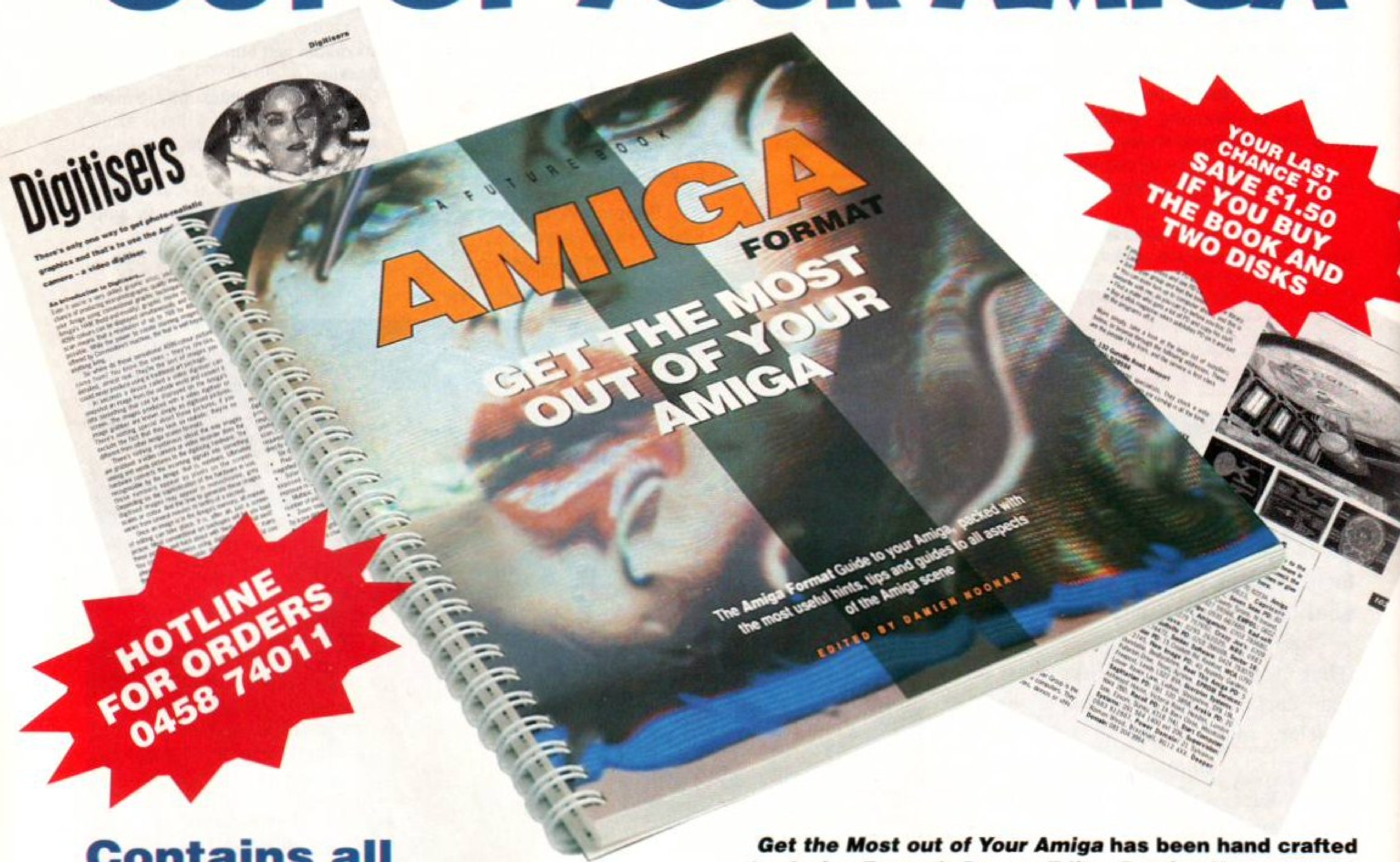
"Please note that the text data used in this program is still under the copyright of Lattice C Inc. If you sell this program you are breaking the law. If you give it to a friend please include this file.

"If you would like to see other program utilities written and enough requests come in to me I will be glad to oblige. I can be contacted using the address below."

The address is:

QAC
Deal Cottage, Bridges
Luxluyan, Nr Bodmin
Cornwall PL30 5EF

THE ONLY WAY TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AMIGA



Contains all this and more...

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***Get the Most out of Your Amiga* has been hand crafted by *Amiga Format*'s Deputy Editor Damien Noonan to be the most complete guide to using the Amiga.**

In 172 information-packed pages it aims to provide advice on all aspects of the Amiga scene: what software to buy, how you can get it free through the PD libraries, how to solve those tricky technical problems, where you're going wrong with a game you can't beat.

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LIMITED PERIOD OFFER: This money-saving offer is open to ***AMIGA FORMAT*** readers only until 31 October 1990. After this date, *GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AMIGA* will be available at full price only.
Please send your order as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.

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I wish to pay by Access/Visa* (*please delete as appropriate)

My credit card number is: __________________________

Expiry date: ______________________________________

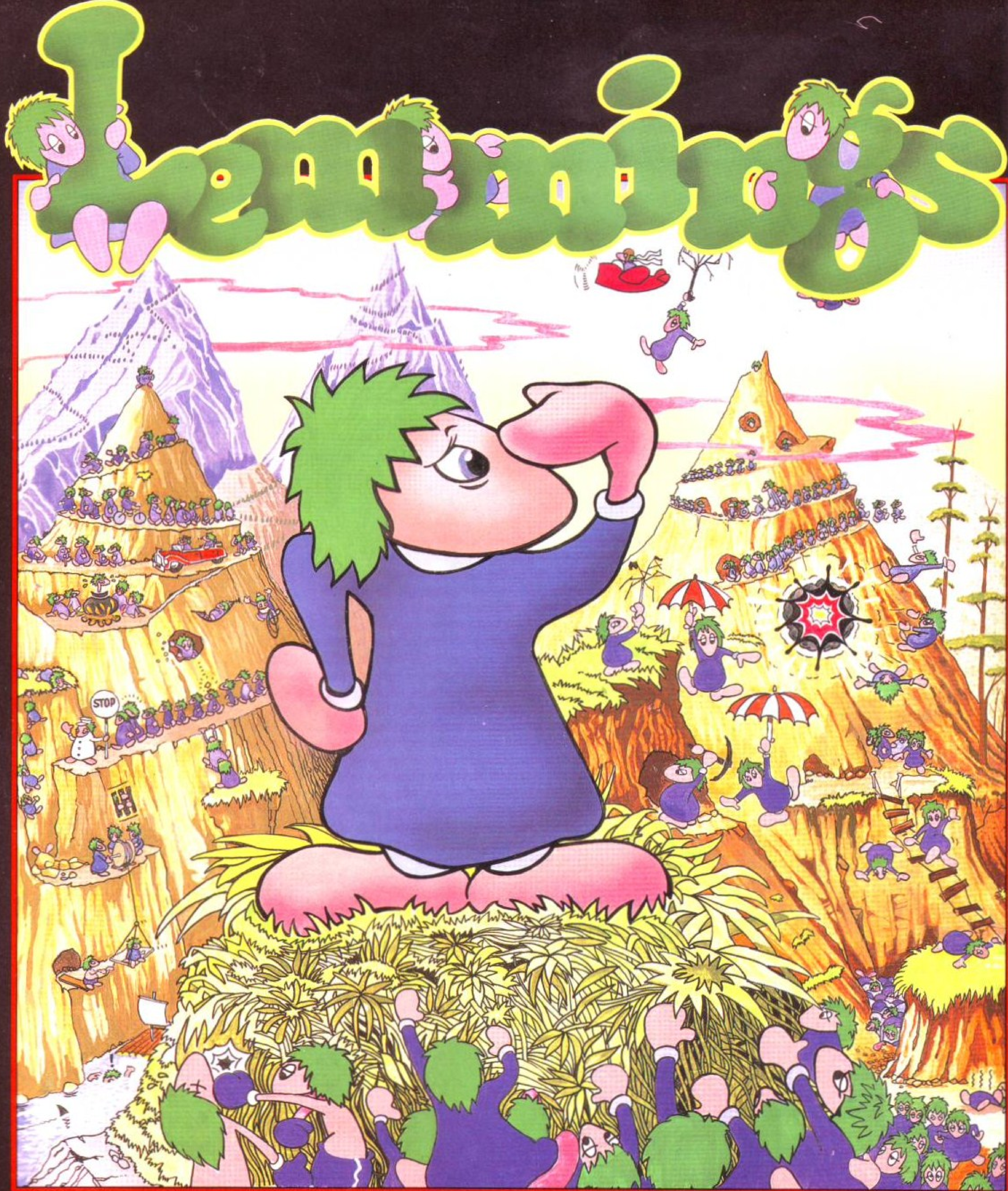
Signed: ____

If paying by cheque, please enclose payment with this card in a sealed envelope addressed to: ***AMIGA FORMAT* Book Offer, FREEPOST, Future Publishing Ltd, The Old Barn, Somerton, Somerset TA11 7BR.** (No stamp is needed if the letter is posted in the UK.) ***Please allow up to 28 days for delivery.***

PIC OF THE MONTH

The best art entry received was *Cosy* from Phil Camp who lives in Bristol. Because magazine printing techniques can't keep up with the Amiga, the picture below is actually cut down in terms of quality – but to see the original in its full glory, just click on the COSY icon on the Workbench. If you think you can do better, send your pictures to us at 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. Keep them graphics coming!




Lemmings
STOP

USING YOUR FORMAT DISK

IMPORTANT! Before using the *Amiga Format* disk, you should back-up the master as soon as possible.

BACKING UP YOUR DISK

For many reasons, it is important to make a backup of the Coverdisk as soon as possible. Copying the disk may sound like a complicated task suitable for techno-buffs only, but it is surprisingly simple provided you read the following instructions carefully:

1. First, turn on your machine and load Workbench. Once the Workbench screen appears and the disk-drive light goes out, remove your Workbench disk and insert our Coverdisk.

2. Next, click once on the Coverdisk icon and then press the right mouse-button and the Workbench menus will appear. Now, while keeping the right mouse-button depressed, move the mouse pointer over to the 'Workbench' heading and a menu will drop down. Move the mouse pointer over the 'duplicate' menu option and then press the left mouse-button.

3. After a few seconds' disk access, the Workbench DiskCopy tool will be loaded and run. Now just follow the on-screen prompts and your *Amiga Format* Coverdisk will be copied to a backup disk. When the machine asks for the destination, insert your blank disk into the drive. Further instructions are in the user's guide that comes with your Amiga.

USING THE PROGRAMS

All programs on the *Amiga Format* disk are specially set up to make them as easy to use as possible. If you can use the Amiga's Workbench then you can use our Coverdisk! If you do have problems with a program, full instructions on loading and using the programs are included in Disk Extra and these should get you up and running. If you still have problems, you should read the documentation file (.DOC) that is included with every program. To run any of the programs on this month's Coverdisk, follow a simple procedure: unless specified differently within Disk Extra, just double-click on the program's icon on the Workbench and it will load and run. Full details on how to use the programs once they have loaded are included as a documentation (text) file with the program.

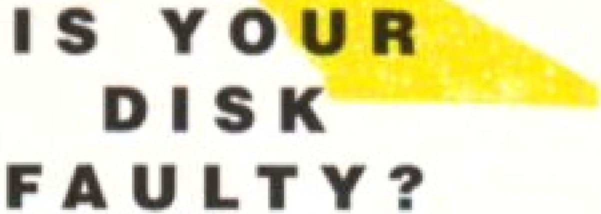
To display a documentation file, just double-click on the appropriate .DOC file and a window will open containing the file's contents. Pressing the space bar will advance the text a page at a time.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

DISK PROBLEMS?

Flummoxed by files? Dumbfounded by disks? Paranoid about programs? If you have a problem with the disk – and you're sure the disk is in full working order. Then what you need is the disk help page. From now on there will be a page devoted to any problems you may encounter with the disk. Sadly, we cannot deal with enquiries by telephone as it is just too time consuming. If you have a problem then send it to us in writing stating the model of your machine and anything you've got attached to (or plugged inside) the computer. It will then be dealt with on the help page in the magazine.

NB the previous disk hotline number is no longer in operation and any problems should be sent in writing to our Bath offices at the usual address. However, if you have a faulty disk then please follow the instructions on this page for its return because we do not have replacements at our Bath office, they have to be obtained from the disk duplicators



IS YOUR DISK FAULTY?

We have done our best to check that the programs on the *Amiga Format* Coverdisk are simple to use, error-free and have no known viruses. However, we cannot answer telephone queries on using the software, and we do not accept liability for any consequences of using the programs on the disk.

If your *Amiga Format* disk is faulty – and out of the tens of thousands duplicated, some are unfortunately bound to be – you should send it back for a free replacement within a month of the cover date to:

Amiga Format

Discopy Labs
Unit A, West March
London Road
Daventry
Northants NN11 4SA

If your Amiga refuses to accept the disk, try using the DISK-DOCTOR utility on your Workbench disk to rescue it before sending it off for a replacement. Full details of *DiskDoctor* can be found in the user's manual that came with your machine.

WE WANT YOUR PROGRAM

If you've got any programs for the Amiga which you think other readers would find useful, interesting or amusing, we'd very much like to know about them.

1. Make sure your program is foolproof to use. 2. Create a file called README.DOC on the disk which explains exactly how to use your program. 3. Fill in this form, sign it, and send it without delay to: Coverdisk Software, *Amiga Format*, 30 Monmouth Street, BATH BA1 2AP. You could win a share of up to £800 prize money for the best programs each month.

EARN UP TO £800

Name..

....

Address..

....

....

Telephone *(Daytime)*..

(Evenings)..

My program name is..

....

Approximate total size of files in kilobytes ....**K**
(we cannot use programs longer than 200K; shorter submissions, under 100K, stand the best chance of publication). It is a:

- ☐ **Game**
- ☐ **Business utility**
- ☐ **Music program**
- ☐ **Novelty**
- ☐ **Technical tool**
- ☐ **Art program**
- ☐ **Educational**
- ☐ **Other**

Brief description ....

....

....

....

Checklist **(please tick):**

- ☐ **Stamped, addressed envelope for return**
- ☐ **README.DOC explanation file on disk**
- ☐ **Printout of README.DOC file (if possible)**
- ☐ **Name, address, machine type written on label**
- ☐ **Disk certified virus free**

IMPORTANT **Please sign this declaration:**
This program is submitted for publication by *Amiga Format*. It is wholly my own work and I agree to indemnify Future Publishing against any possible legal action should copyright problems arise.

Signed ....

Date ....

BEYOND THE FINAL FRONTIER

From the creators of Beast and Beast II comes this awe-inspiring combination of shoot-'em-up action and trading stratagems. Featuring innovative hyperspace sections, full-screen aliens and a whole galaxy to explore: AWESOME will take you beyond the final frontier.

Amiga Screen Shots





























The FS630 is one of two recent releases from Kawai. For £190 you get a full-sized keyboard with 61 notes, as well as a large range of drums.



Pick of the Pops



Hi, Pop Pickers! Wondering what you should ask Santa to deliver on Dec 25? **JON BATES** casts a keen eye and ear over the year's best musical releases.

Keyboards and Synthesisers



This is the Casio MT750. Like its sister keyboard, the CT470, it sells for £229, but this version does not have a full-size key layout.



Hotly tipped for favourite in the simple keyboard stakes is the Yamaha PS590. With a full four-octave keyboard and 100 sampled sounds, it is seriously good value at only £149.99.

Well. You are certainly spoilt for choice here and the final selection really does depend on your budget. If you are starting off in the world of MIDI and music then you will need an instrument that covers everything: drums, the ability to play several sounds simultaneously, maybe a pitchbend control, and obviously a keyboard to play it all in from.

The first port of call on your quest should be the world of single keyboards, those self-accompanying machines. As long as they are equipped with MIDI ports they are the ideal starting place, since MIDI lets you gain access to the multi-timbral chip and use it just like a tone module. There may well be disadvantages in that you might not be able to create your own voices and it might not be fully touch-sensitive. Like most things in the hi-tech world over the past few years, the unit cost for facilities has tumbled down: you get more for your money each year. This year's crop is no exception.

Casio have two keyboards for £229, the CT470 and MT750. The 470 has full-sized keys and 110 sounds, the 750 has a pitch bend wheel and mini keys.

Kawai entered this market a couple of years ago after their successes with the K series of synths. They have two new keyboards, the FS630 and FS680. The 630 costs £189.99 and has a 61-note full-sized keyboard,100 sounds and a large drum department. The 680 is extremely smart and lets you dump user-programmed sounds out to sequencers, program auto patterns from any sequencer and give you 5 channels of sound all at once. The 680 costs £269.99.

My best bet, however, is a Yamaha PS 590 or PS790. The 790 has 100 sampled sounds, five-octave keyboard, 50 sampled drums, vector synthesis joystick, pitch bend control and stereo output for £229.99. The 590 has a four octave keyboard, 100 sampled sounds and 20 drums, but is only £149.99 which is serious good value.

Roland are bundling the CM 32L tone module with *Tiger Cub* and *Apprentice*. This is a promising hardware and software mix, but has no keyboard.





In the realms of serious synthesisers, Yamaha are again likely to lead the field. The new SY22 (ABOVE) and its sister, the SY77, are strong contenders for Christmas success.

On the synth stakes, Roland are doing a package which is a CM32L module, capable of eight music tracks plus drums, *Tiger Cub* sequencing and *Apprentice* scoring software plus leads for the reasonable price of £469. However you still lack an inputting keyboard. Amongst their range of computer music-orientated hardware is a 49-note velocity sensitive mother keyboard called the PC-200, which retails at £175.

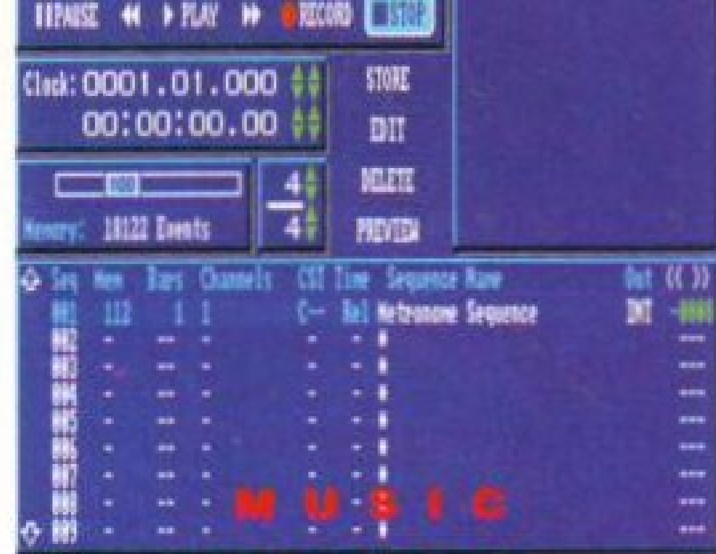
My bet for the most popular synth this Christmas is on the Yamaha SY22. Multi timbral, touch sensitive and kitted out with a staggering range of voices for a few pence off £800. Not cheap, but the quality is reflected in the sounds. I await a modular version armed with an open cheque book (but closed account), luncheon vouchers and several begging letters.

BELOW: The PS 790 from Yamaha is big brother to the PS 590.



LEFT: The Casio CT470 keyboard has full-size keys, 110 different notes and costs £229.







Junior Funlab

Some time back – April, actually – we reported that Kawai had joined forces with Steinberg to produce a complete sequencer and voice programming package with a Kawai keyboard to boot. The 'Funlab' proper will hit the shops about the same time that Santa rounds up his reindeer. Available now, however, is the junior version called, not surprisingly 'Junior Funlab'.

Using a Kawai MS710 keyboard it has a five-channel sequencer and is downwardly compatible with all Funlab song files, although apparently not the other way round. It operates a little faster than Funlab since there are less routines for it to run but it does not offer the customised voice-programming facility. Junior Funlab costs £179 and this includes the MIDI interface, MS710 keyboard, software and MIDI cables. Its big brother is set to retail at £329.



ABOVE: This is Junior Funlab, the new lower-priced integrated Amiga music bundle from Kawai. LEFT is the MS710 keyboard which comes with the Funlab package.



Samplers

Because the Paula sound chip has pretty good sound converters and can be made to produce a quite presentable sound the market is flooded with a vast array of sound samplers from about £40 upwards.

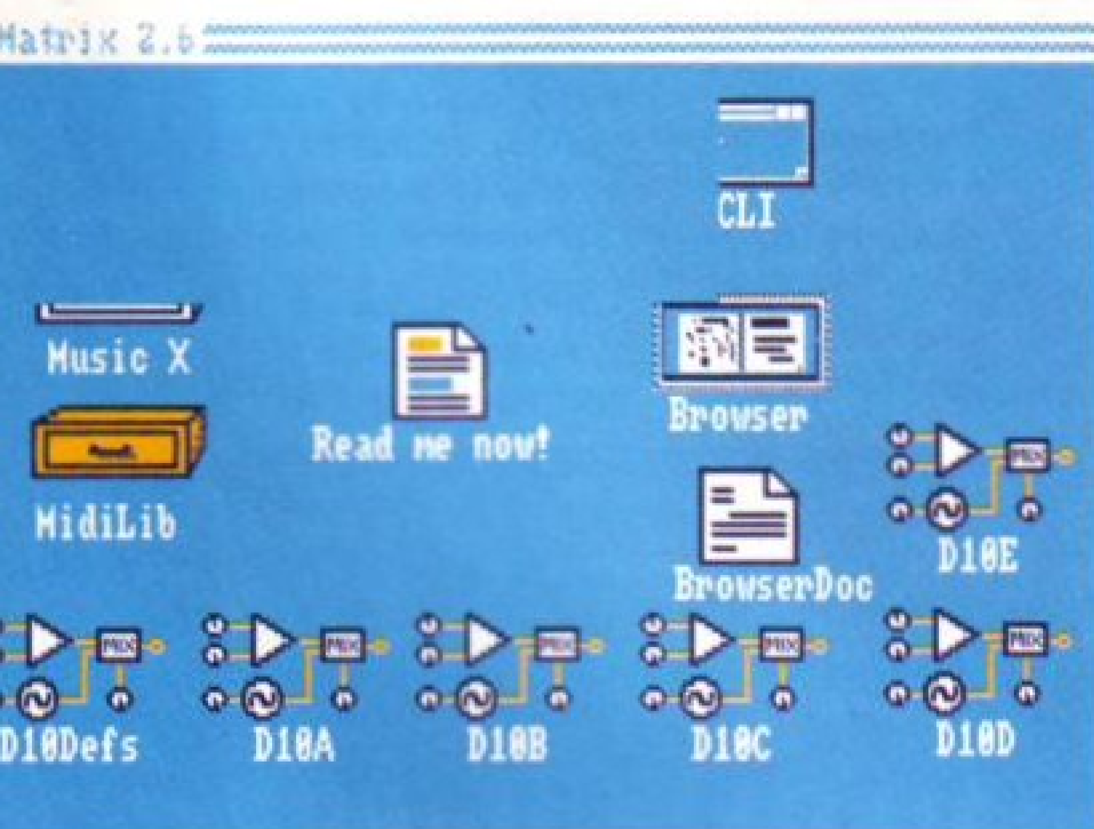
Top of the shop is the all-singing, all-dancing and all-talking Audio Engineer which very smartly manipulates and edits stereo samples and dumps them out in IFF form. The quality of the sampling hardware is about the cleanest you can get and retails for a shade under £200.



There is absolutely no doubt as to which is the best sound sampler currently available: it is Audio Engineer. Both the hardware (pictured RIGHT) and the software are excellent. The only real problem is that it is also the most expensive, retailing at £199.



ABOVE is MasterSound, probably the best sampler to buy if you can't quite afford the full splash for Audio Engineer, the software end of which is pictured RIGHT.



LEFT: A handy little extra for the Amiga music buff might be the *Music Matrix* disk-based magazine.

Bits 'n' Pieces

Subscribe for another 12 months to *Amiga Format*. Having done that you could have a look at the *Music Matrix* disk-based music magazine which produces four issues a year, each one packed with articles and info plus free voices for most of the popular synths, tunes, and PD music programs. Each disk will set you back £10 or it's £35 for a year's sub.

There is also an Amiga PD library service that runs along with this as well as disks of professional voices for popular synths, like the M1, all at very reasonable prices indeed.



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India at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. The Emperor's grip is weakening. All over the country rival factions bid for power.

This is your chance to change the course of history. Take the role of any one of the six contenders for the Empire and prepare to make India your own. Capture opposing states, grapple with brutal riots, stage lavish processions to impress your rivals and counter assassination attempts.

- Spectacular scenery, rich native colours and exotic animated sequences.
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NEW! Release 3.0

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- Custom digital gain circuit allows you to alter audio gain with software control
- Regulated voltage reference and hardware sampling clock ensure low noise operation
- Left and right line level inputs for mono or stereo sampling
- Microphone input and on board pre-amp allow easy sampling of voice

Perfect Sound (PC board only shown) is one of the most advanced 8 bit samplers available for any computer.

America's best selling sound digitizer is now available in Europe with new features and a new price! The Perfect Sound™ 3.0 hardware records up to 32,000 samples/sec in mono or 12,000 in stereo. A built in mic jack allows easy microphone hookup. An advanced A/D circuit provides a "sample and hold" with a hardware sampling clock for precision sampling. Digital gain lets you adjust input sound levels with easy software controls. On board voltage regulation ensures low noise operation and clean samples.

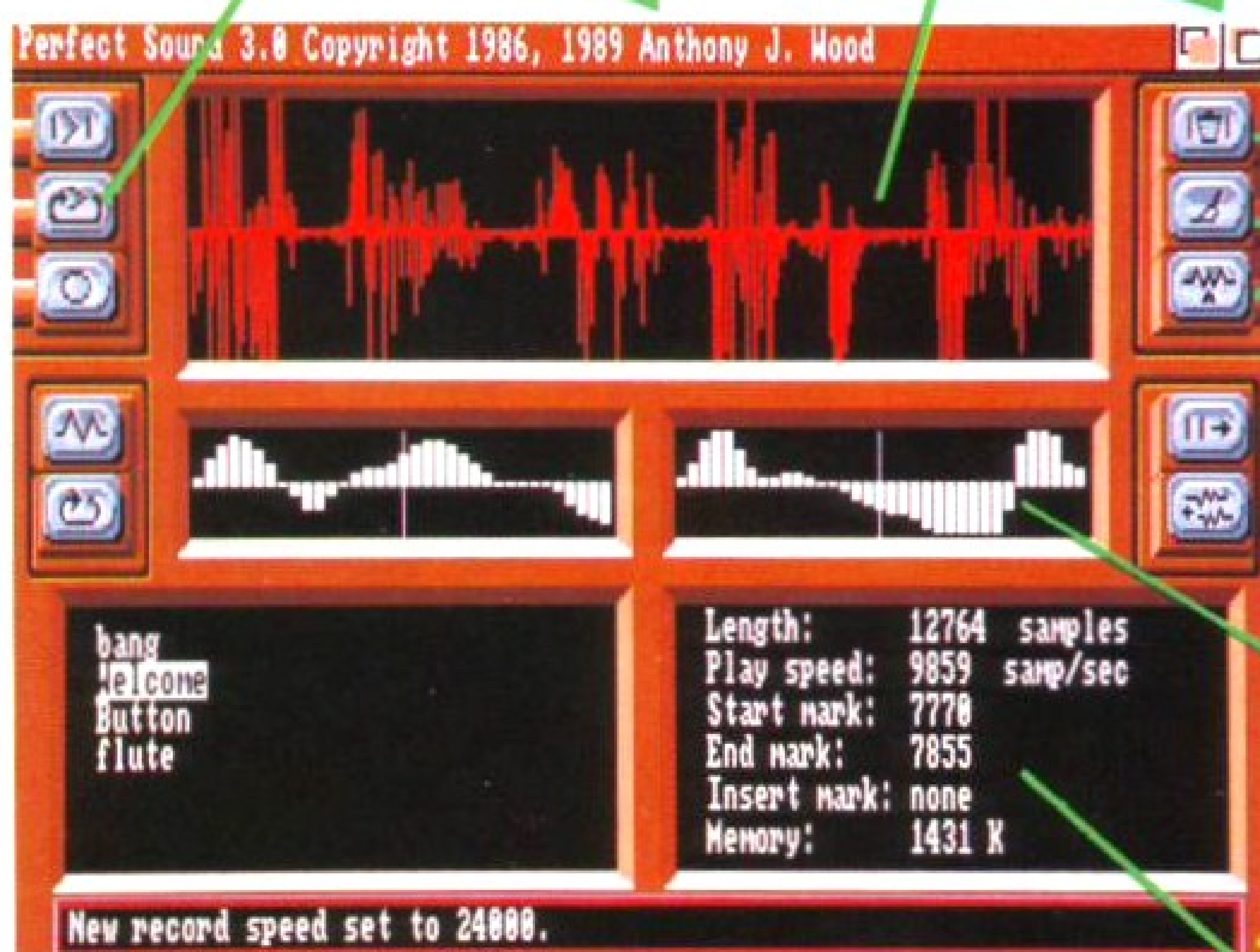
To complement the Perfect Sound 3.0 hardware is the new Perfect Sound editor. Use your mouse to cut, copy, and paste sound. Advanced tools such as digital low pass filter, ramp up, ramp down, resample, looping, and real time echo are standard. You can also use Perfect Sound to create IFF instruments.

RRP £59.95

Easily loop sections of a sound. You can even adjust the looping section while the sound plays.

The sound you are currently editing is graphed here. You can easily mark sections to edit by dragging your mouse over the graph.

Common tools such as delete, paste, and insert are available by clicking on buttons. Other tools are available via menus.



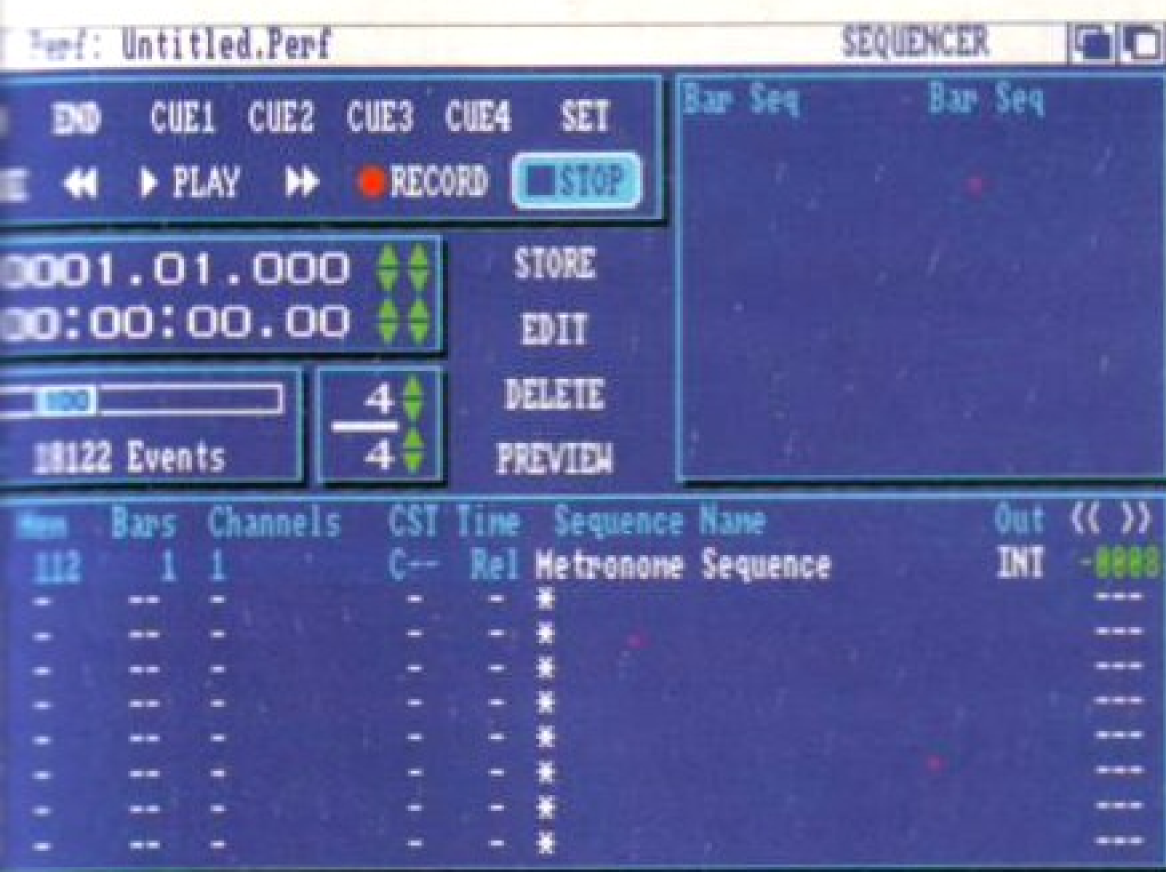
Zoom in on your sound. Individual samples are shown for precise editing.

The status window displays information about your sounds such as playback speed and size.

Play Beatle songs backwards. Change the words coming out of someone's mouth. Create custom sound effects. Create instruments for music software. Perfect Sound does it all!

SunRize Industries

Distributed in the UK by HB Marketing Ltd, Unit 3, Poyle 14
Newlands Drive, Colnbrook, Slough SL3 ODX
Tel: 0753-686000, Fax: 0753-680343



ABOVE: Both ***Music X*** and its ***Junior*** version could well be a good choice for Christmas 1990. They combine sequencing with other features and the ***Junior*** version can be upgraded.

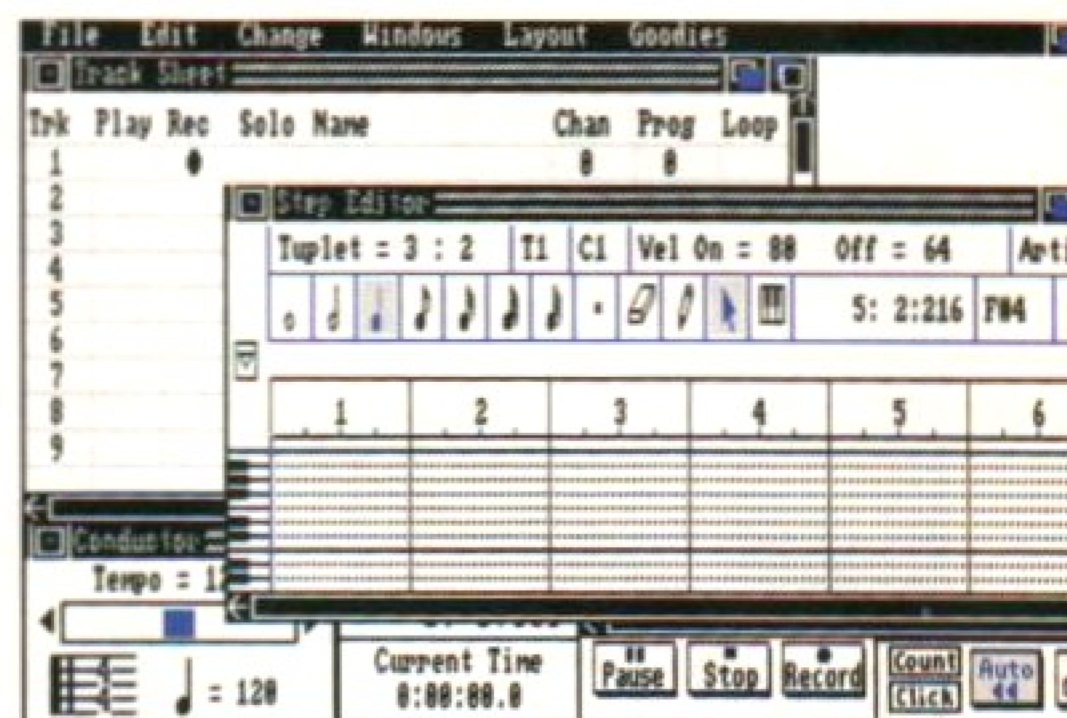


Sequencing

Really it's a toss-up between *Trax, Junior Music X* and *Tiger Cub. Tiger Cub* is a good simple program with fabulous editing and controlling features and it uses the internal voices. *Trax* is rather cleverer in having movable windows and slightly more tracks than *Tiger Cub* for you to record on, but it has no internal voice support.

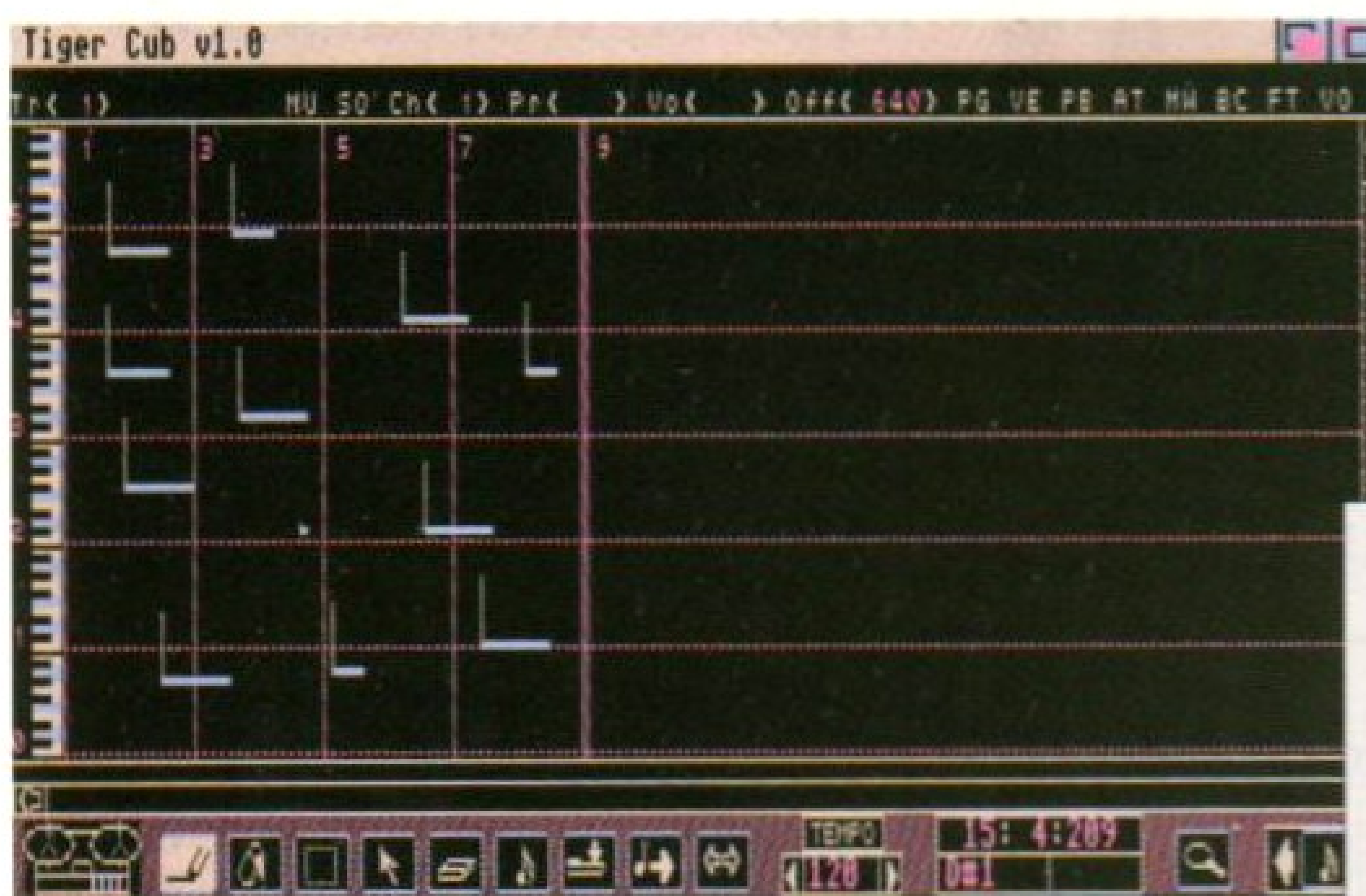
Junior Music X is the cut-down version that misses out on the voicing part of its big brother as well as one or two other bits and pieces. It uses the internal voices and can be upgraded later on.

Trax is £99, *Tiger Cub* is £99 and *Junior Music X* is now £75. If you figure that *Music X* is constantly upgradable as more versions appear, it is probably the best bet. On the other hand the editing on the others is a mite more friendly, but *Trax* is MIDI-only.



ABOVE: Another of the contenders for a place in your Christmas Shopping list is *Trax* from Passport Designs.

BELOW: If you wish to make music for use in games, the most serious tool around is currently *TFMX.*



LEFT: *Tiger Cub* is another sequencing package that costs less than £100 and could be a seriously viable choice. It's no easy decision to make.

Games and Soundtracking

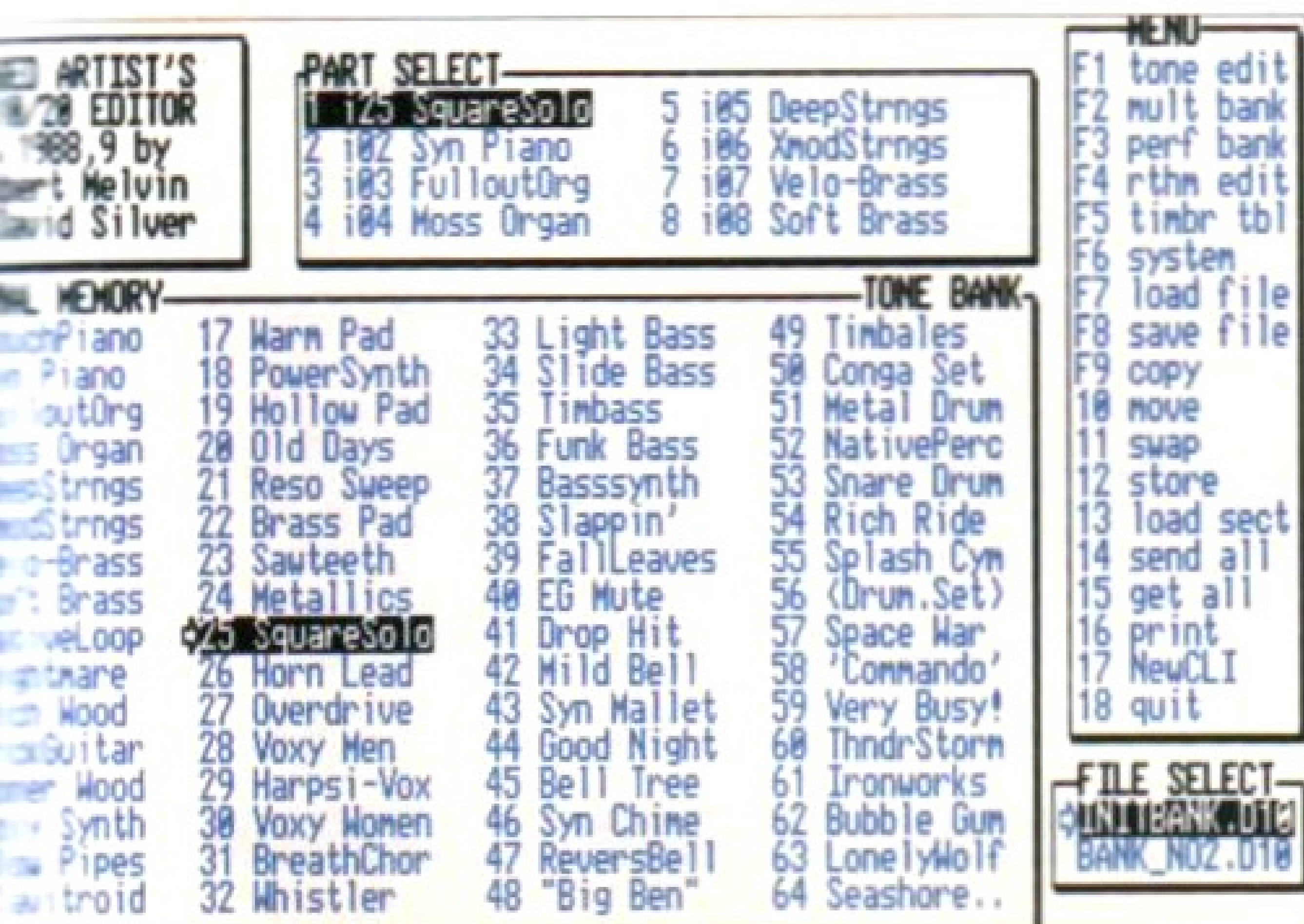
If you aren't into MIDI but want to use the internal sound chip rather in the manner of a games soundtrack, then maybe *TFMX Soundtool* is the one to go for at £44.95 with its copious ways of setting up samples, patterns, tracks and macro features. *TFMX* is a serious piece of kit but it does produce the goods.

For pure fun the winner has to be *Instant Music* for £18.90 or thereabouts. It's been around for a few good years now but it is a program that enables the complete novice and musical ant-brain to get a 'lorra laffs' and get interested in visually creating pieces without much trouble at all thanks to the colourful presentation and brilliant concept of the program. No MIDI possibilities but no experience necessary either.

Voicing Software

As it stands at the moment, Gadjits win if you have Roland equipment. *Music X* is starting to get its act together on the library software but it is still a bit backwards in coming forwards with piles of new sounds.

Don't forget that Dr T have a prodigious range known as *Caged Artist* which covers 14 (at the last count) popular synths and modules for about £85 each.



LEFT: When it comes to voicing software, Dr T's *Caged Artist* series covers the most comprehensive range of different synths and modules.

Festive Phone Numbers:
Trax, Dr T and *Tiger Cub* are all available from MCM, who answer to: 071 258 3454
Junior Music X is from The Software Business on: 0480 496497
TFMX and Audio Engineer are from HB Marketing: 0895 444433
The Music Matrix: 0592 714887
Casio: 081 450 9131
Kawai: 0202 296629
Roland: 081 568 1247
Yamaha: 0908 371771

Peering into the Future...

Perhaps all this may help N Atkinson who wrote in Issue 16 to bewail the lack of serious music software for the Amiga and also the lack of patch creating software. What he failed to mention was that although you can do digital 'direct to disk' recording on the ST, Mac and PC it will cost you a minor fortune at present.

Sampling on any machine, if using the internal chip, is still low grade by professional standards and certainly not 16-bit: it may sample in 16-bit and store in 16-bit, but unless it has 16-bit D-to-A converters as additional hardware there is no way it can do it.

Looking at the positive side, you get truly interactive music software programs at a very reasonable cost and, as one of the recording studios who use the Amiga pointed out, given the number of Amigas selling at the moment there has to be a substantial base of budding musicians who are growing up on it.

AMIGA DEALS

AMIGA 500 STANDARD PACK

★ A500 computer ★ 512k RAM ★ 1Mb disk drive ★
★ mouse ★ modulator ★
★ power supply ★ operation-manuals ★
★ workbench disks, etc. ★



ONLY £339.95

BATMAN PLUS PACK

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- ★ Batman the Movie
- ★ F18 Interceptor
- ★ New Zealand Story
- ★ Deluxe Paint 2
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- ★ Shadow of the Beast II
- ★ Back to the Future Part II
- ★ Knightbreed
- ★ Deluxe Paint II NEW!
- ★ Megablaster joystick
- ★ Dust cover
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- ★ Wicked ten game pack Inc. Invaders, Pacman, Bouncer.

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TOTAL RRP OVER £250 (of games)
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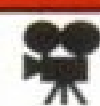
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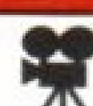
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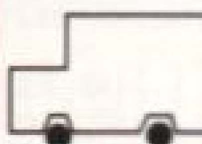
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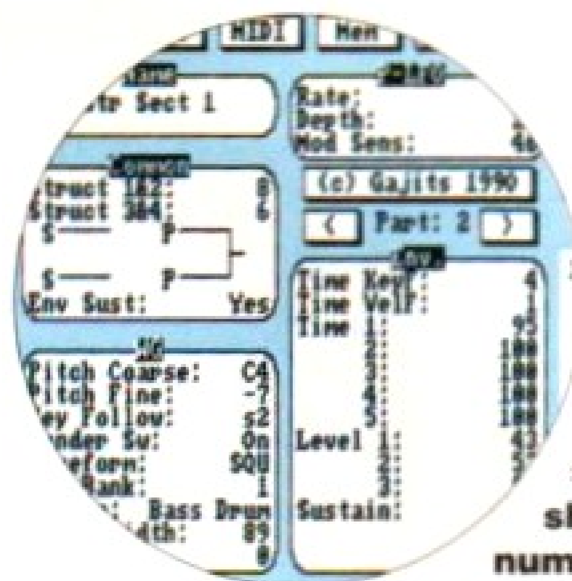
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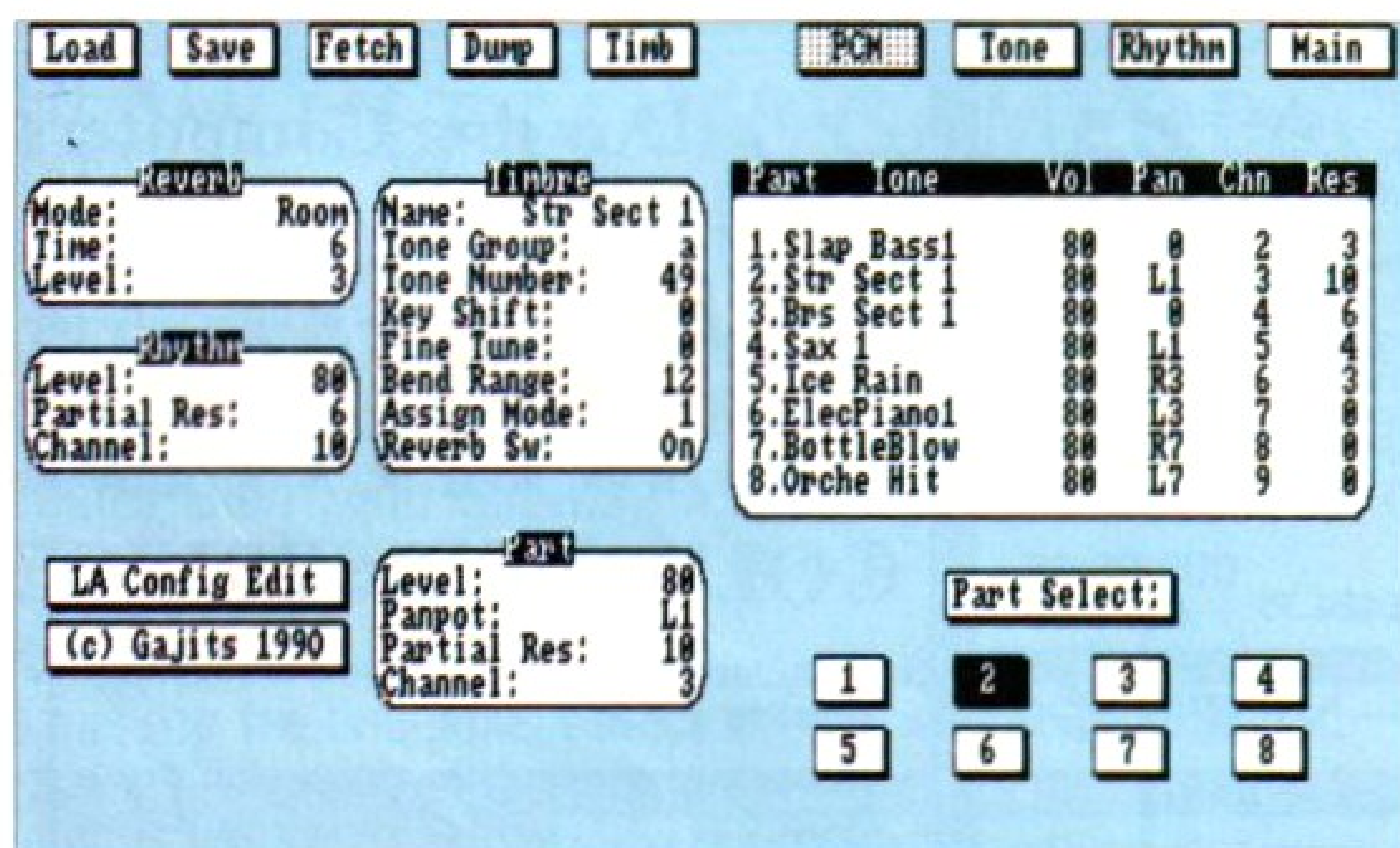


Musical Companion

Gadjits have worked with Roland on their voicing packages for the D series of synthesisers and modules. **JON BATES** accompanies you through the results.



LEFT: Creating sounds. The sheer amount of numerical data present is not too bad, since much of it can be altered either by dragging the graph or by using the randomize factors which take a lot of sweat out of the job.



LEFT: Setting up sounds eight at a time in the Configuration Edit screen. Notice that reverb, volume and pan settings can be adjusted from here. Each configuration can be saved as a file and then 'squirted' into your sequence.

Programming synths and tone modules is about as much fun as watching a plank of wood warp. It's slow and you can't see anything happening.

Good voicing software gives you nice, clear, simple graphic displays of the sound: envelopes, structure, filtering, amplitude and all the other twiddly bits. The sounds created need to be stored as files to form a library which can be called into the synth or into computer memory.

Gadgits' Gift

The Gadgits programs are on two disks available separately. *4D Companion* is designed to work with the D5, D10 and D20 synthesizers and the D110 module. *CMpanion* works with the sound modules – MT32 and CM32L, CM32P and CM64 – which are made specifically to work with computers. It will also work with the RA 50 Intelligent arranger and maybe with E-10 and E-20 keyboards.

On loading up you get the main menu screen. This is where you initially decide which module the program will default to. It also transfers the entire memory of the instrument between computer and disk and helps you around the rest of the program.

Common Sense

The program is divided into several areas, not all of them applying to every instrument. The Tone Edit screen is for the creation of sounds from scratch. Gadjits have gone in for a very common-sense approach here and although the screen is littered with numeric data, it is not as complex as it seems.

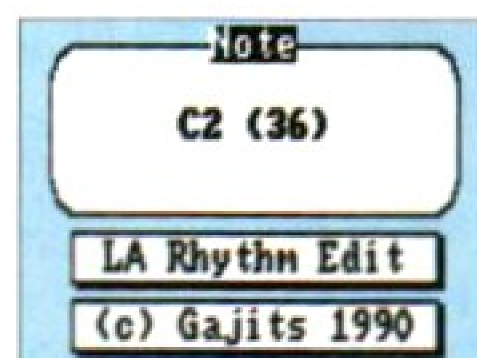
The graph to the right of the screen applies either to variations in volume of the sound, or the changes in tone, as you hold the note down. For sounds that slide around you can also alter the pitch from here. Since each sound has four separate parts you have to choose which part you are viewing and hearing, but you can link parts together, so that any change made on the graph is copied to any of the other parts you choose.

Randomise

This still leaves what seems like a mighty complex set of operations, as sounds can be created in a multitude of structures, combining samples with wave forms in literally thousands of possibilities. The program comes into its own here as there is a randomize feature. This works by superimposing a set of masks on top of the sound. You can create your own, but the program comes with a whole set.

Each mask takes a particular feature of the sound: scaling, brightness, pitch envelope, detuning, velocity and so on. All you do is keep hitting randomize until a sound appears that you like. Much more to the point than other random sound creation facilities I have seen on other programs: I found it a great help in creating the unusual sounds. If you wanted to create a lifelike instrument, though, it is probably not the way to go about it.

Any sound alteration you make is sent to the instrument and can be played either by the right-hand mouse button – the position on the screen determines the pitch and velocity – or from a keyboard. The new sound can be saved on to disk and called at will.



ABOVE: Any drum sound can be put on any key, at any volume, and panned anywhere with or without reverb.

Cross Edit

Depending on your instrument you will need to use one of the configuration screens. These either set up eight sounds as one multiple patch, or set each sound on a different MIDI channel. Not only that but the overall reverb, which is very comprehensive indeed, can easily be set up as well as pan control, the degree to which the sound is biased towards the left or right speaker.

If you have one of the keyboard synths there is also a performance edit page which selects sounds and tones for the upper and lower keyboard sections. If you have one of the PCM synths or modules – that is, one that replays pre-sampled sound – you will need the PCM edit page which lets you pick and edit six parts, choose a MIDI channel for each and sort out reverb and other effects.

All the instruments have a drum kit which can also be edited and any sound put anywhere with any volume, switched reverb and pan control. All you do is pick a note on the screen keyboard and call up a sound to fit to it. In this way you can match up one drum kit to one from another instrument – handy if you are doing quite a lot of sequencing work.

Refreshing the Parts

If you have any of the Roland range of synths I would say that Gadjits' *4D* and *CM* software are essential. Nobody is pretending that you can understand the peculiarities of synthesis straight-away but the Gadjits software makes the problem much easier and delves into parts that ordinary software simply cannot reach.

GADJITS 4D COMPANION
GADJITS CMPANION
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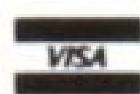
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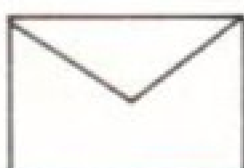
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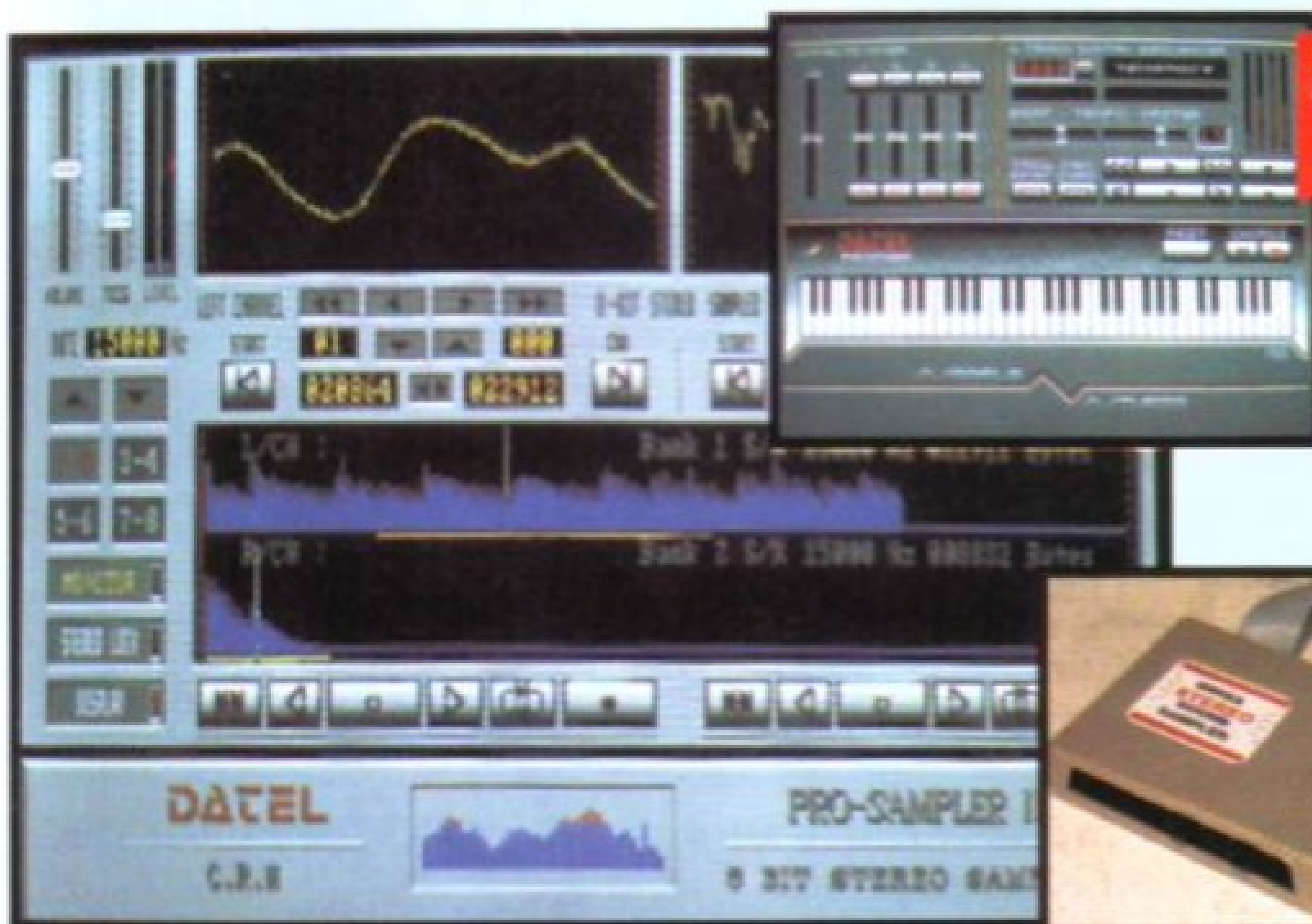
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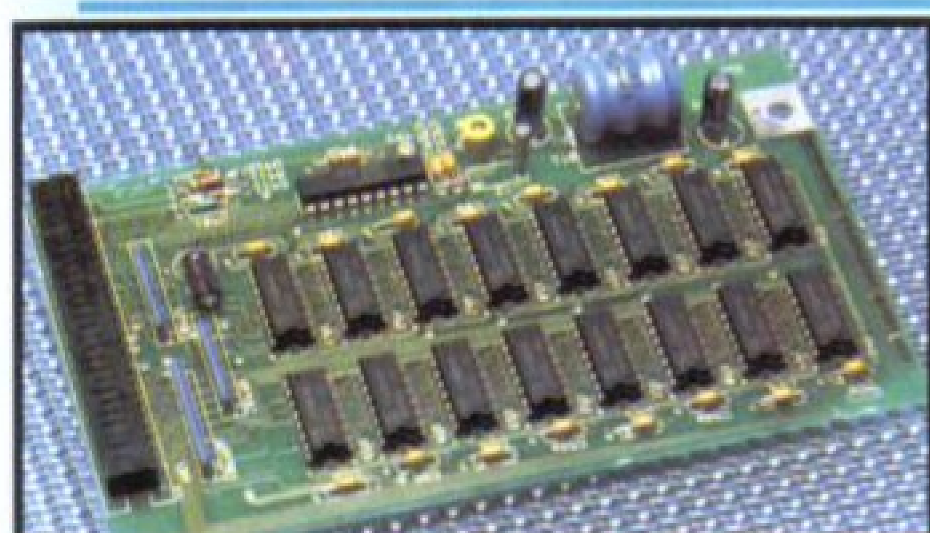
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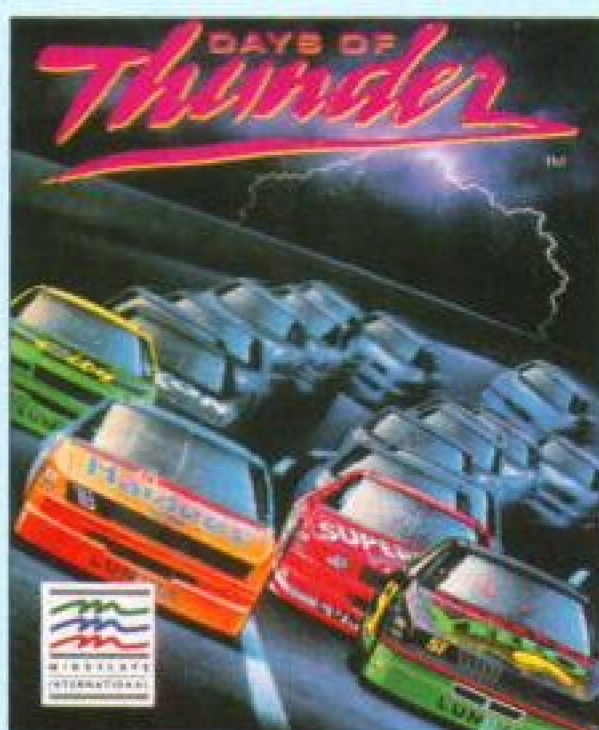
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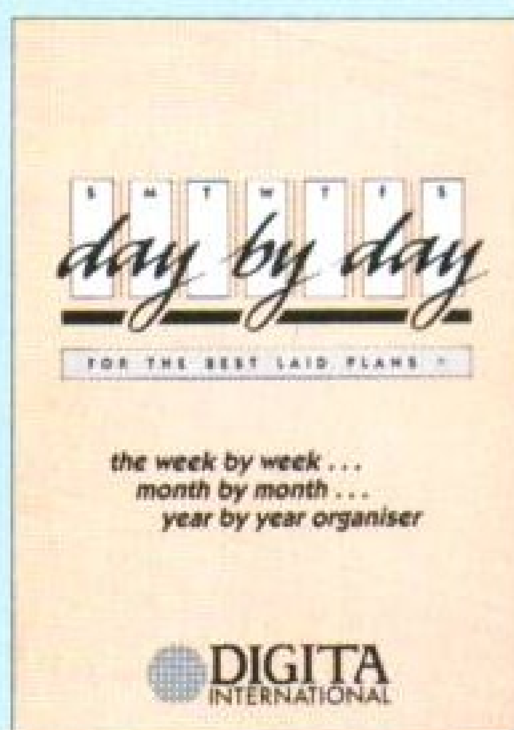


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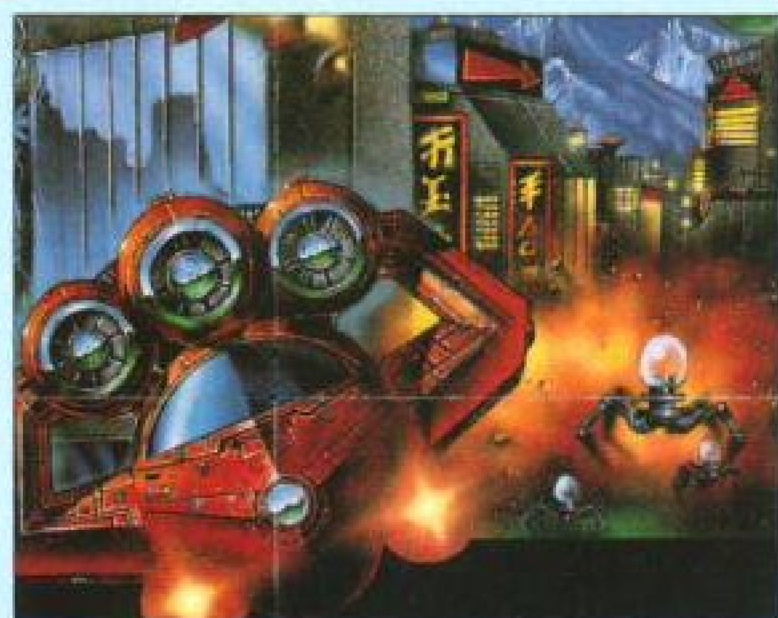
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10 runners-up prizes of Team Yankee, the game and the book.

Team Yankee is the excellent new tank simulator from Empire, based on the Harold Coyle book of the same name. Last month we reviewed it, giving it a highly-recommended rating of 81% and saying 'If you long for the thunder of a 30-ton destroyer then join Team Yankee'.

Now, you not only have the chance to join Team Yankee by winning a copy of the game, but you can also win your very own remote control tank, if of a slightly lower tonnage.

The tank we'd like to give away is a classic, the German King Tiger. It's a 1/16th scale model of the real thing but it's still pretty big, measuring 64cm long, 24cm wide and 20cm high. It has a 360 degree rotating turret and will roll right over any sort of terrain, from the bedroom carpet to the garden rockery.

The model does come in kit form (with the remote control unit and battery supplied) so you will have to build and paint it yourself – which is half the fun, as far as we're concerned. The model is quite complicated, though, and you will need to know what you're doing to put it together – so be prepared to spend a good deal of time making it (or effort getting someone else to).

As well as the tank the winner will get a copy of *Team Yankee* the game and book, as will 10 lucky runners-up.

HOW TO ENTER

Write the answers to the following three questions on the back of a postcard or stuck-down envelope and send it to: Yankee Tank Comp, Amiga Format, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

All the entries should reach us by 10th December at the latest and don't forget to include your name, your address and phone number on the postcard as per usual.

QUESTIONS

1. What sort of tracks do tanks usually get about on?
   a) Record tracks
   b) Caterpillar tracks
   c) Kangaroo tracks

2. What is a T-34?
   a) An offensive formation for the Miami Dolphins
   b) The main road through Czechoslovakia
   c) A big, nasty Russian tank

3. Which of these is the name of a type of tank?
   a) Reagan
   b) Abrams
   c) Heseltine

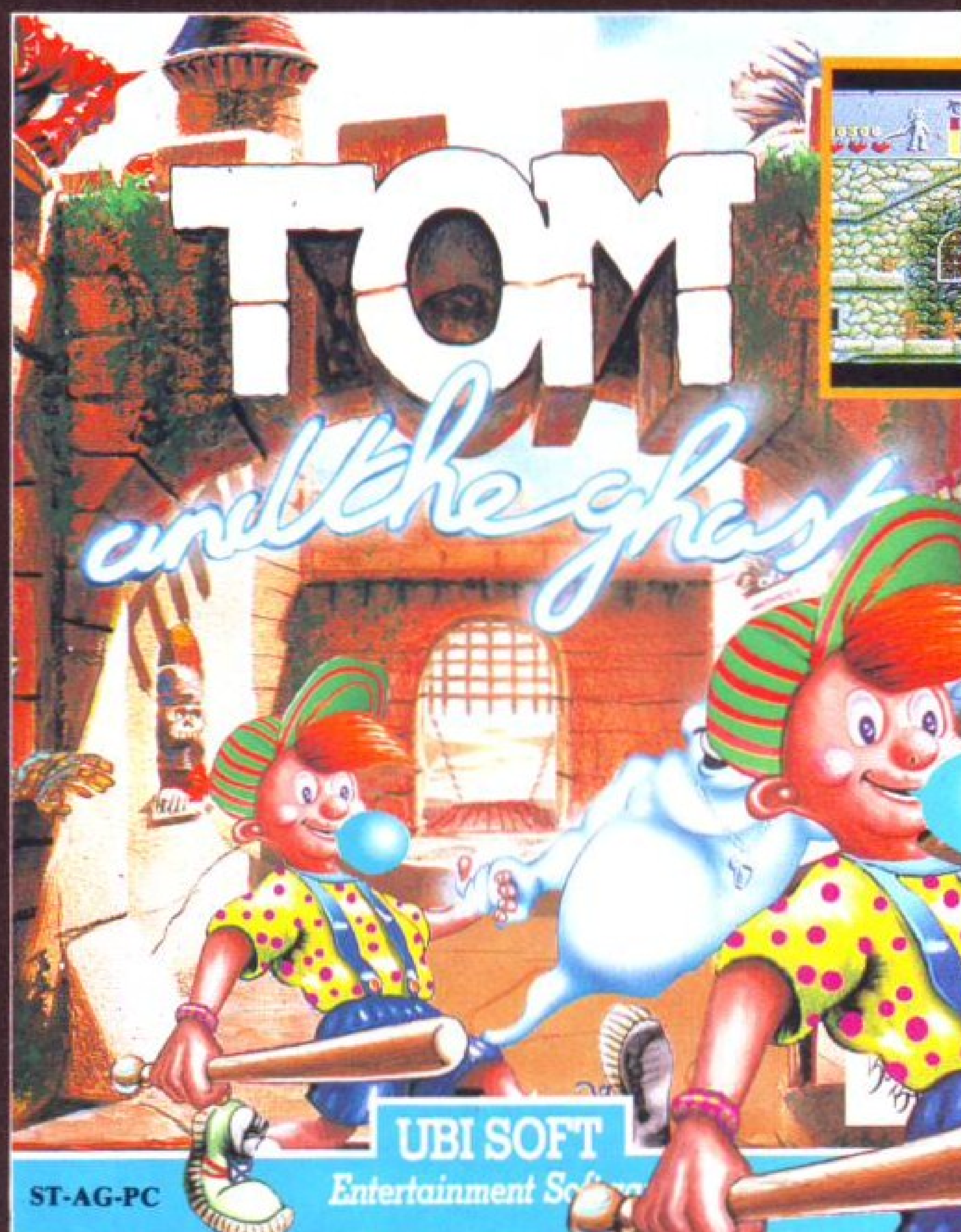
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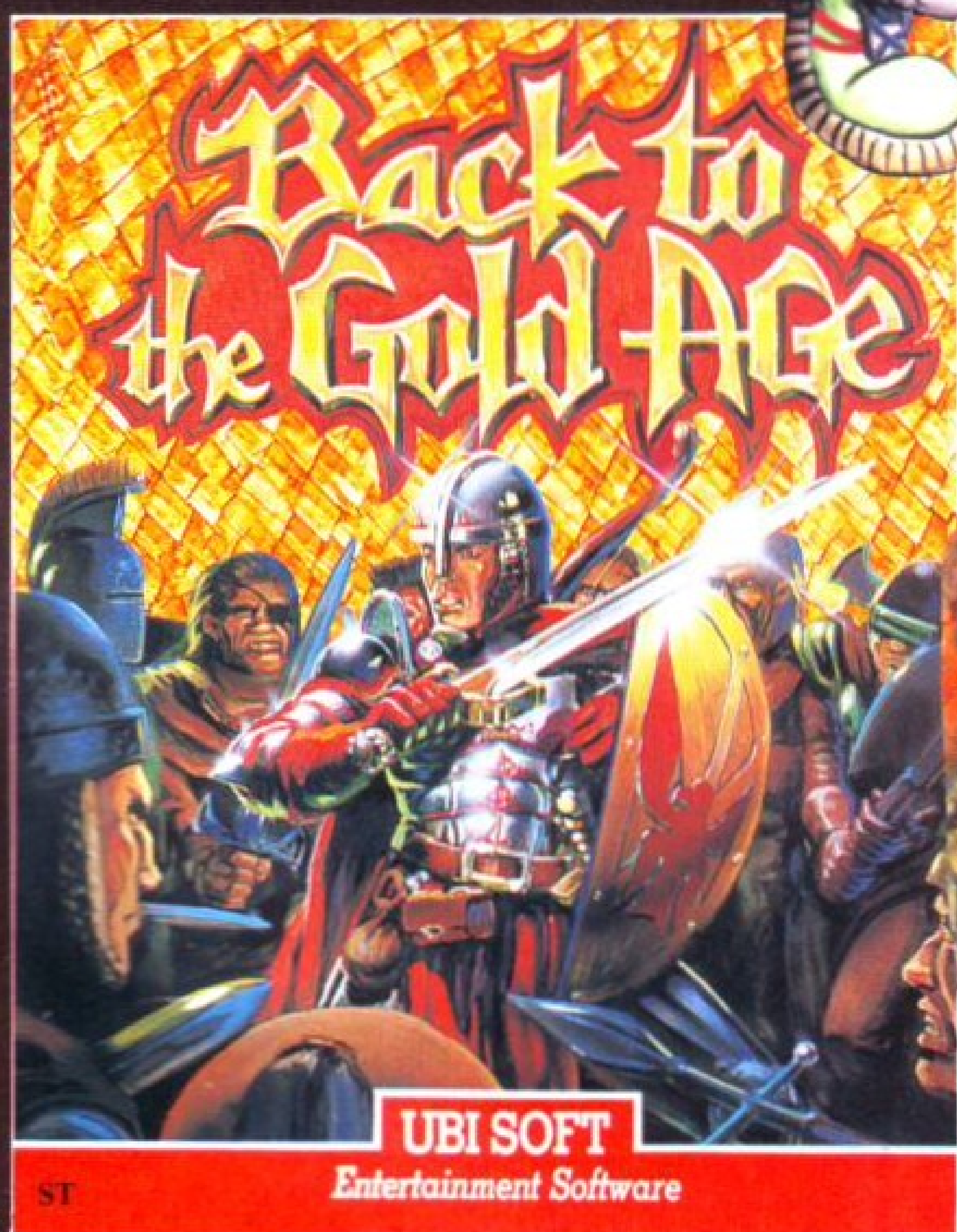
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PD Update

The latest on the demos scene is checked out by **MAFF EVANS**, while the low-down on all the newest free software comes from **PAT McDONALD**.

FONT2SCULPT Version 4.3

GEORGE THOMPSON SERVICES

This is a very handy little utility indeed. It's the very latest version – what do you expect in this column, the *Juggler* demo? – and has had a few bug fixes.

Font2Sculpt is only useful to those people who possess a copy of *Sculpt 3D* or *4D*, the ubiquitous ray-trace rendering programs. *Font2Sculpt* converts any Amiga bitmapped font into *Sculpt* objects. The result is that you can ray-trace huge messages in any font into any scene.

Ray-traced images look very impressive, but people often find them a bit too arty without any words or messages. With this gadget you can include anything you want, lending a surreal aspect to your graphics.

ACC1

AMIGANUTS

Well strange title – but it's going to be a popular disk. Ever wanted a book that could teach you assembly language programming? Buy this floppy instead – it's the first of the Amiga Coders Club disks, and includes information for programmers both experienced and novice, written by people such as Francois Nico, Mike Cross and Dave Edwards.

ACC1 consists of written exercises that start at ground level: "think of the 68000 as the computer brain and its memory as a series of lots of pigeon-holes". Also on the disk are plenty of example listings and data.

The whole shebang revolves around using Devpac 2. It lists the entry-level system for writing assembly language – at least 1 Meg of memory and two floppy disk drives – plus the optional extras, like a Pink Floyd album. Highly recommended if you're interested in the subject.

UTILITIES

AMIGANUTS 790

Begorrah you know, an' all an' all an' all – this one's got me confused. It appears to contain three well-known PD programs, namely *Noisetracker*, *Diskmaster* and *Fraxion's Module Ripper V7*. Also on there is *Protracker V1.0*, which bears a distinct resemblance to the infamous *SoundTracker*.

Clicking on the *Noisetracker* option from the menu actually gives you *StarTrekker*, which again looks extremely like *SoundTracker*. What's going on here, then? *StarTrekker* turns out to be *Noisetracker V2.12*, rewritten by a Norwegian who goes by the alias Exolon of Fairlight.

What more is there to say? If you want some very cheap sampling and sequencing software, this is the most up-to-date disk to buy. No two ways about it. The sample modules for playing include the widespread *Crockett's Theme*, *Maximinimum*, *Shadows* and *Threat*. All very good stuff, and a noble continuation of the *'Tracker* saga.

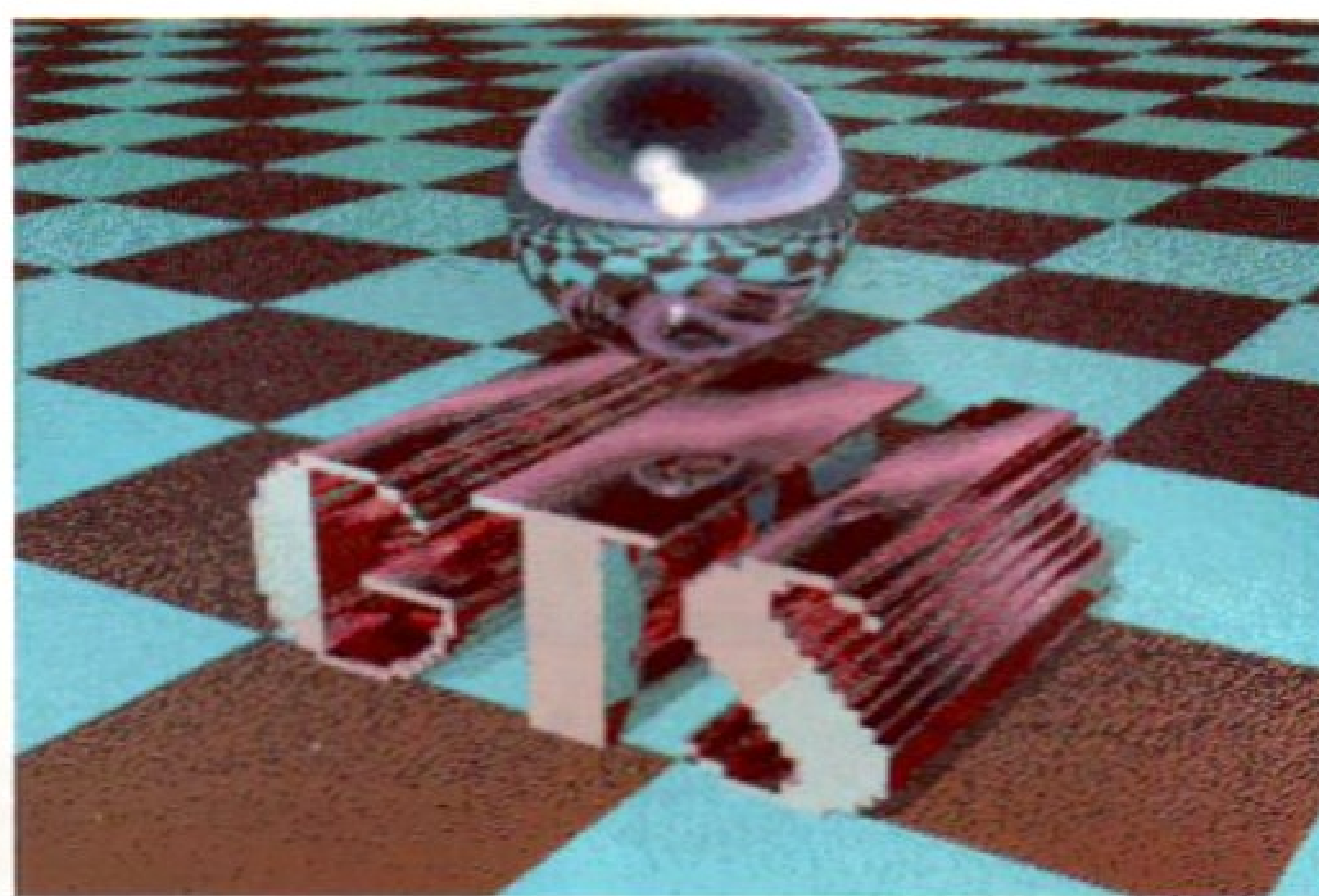
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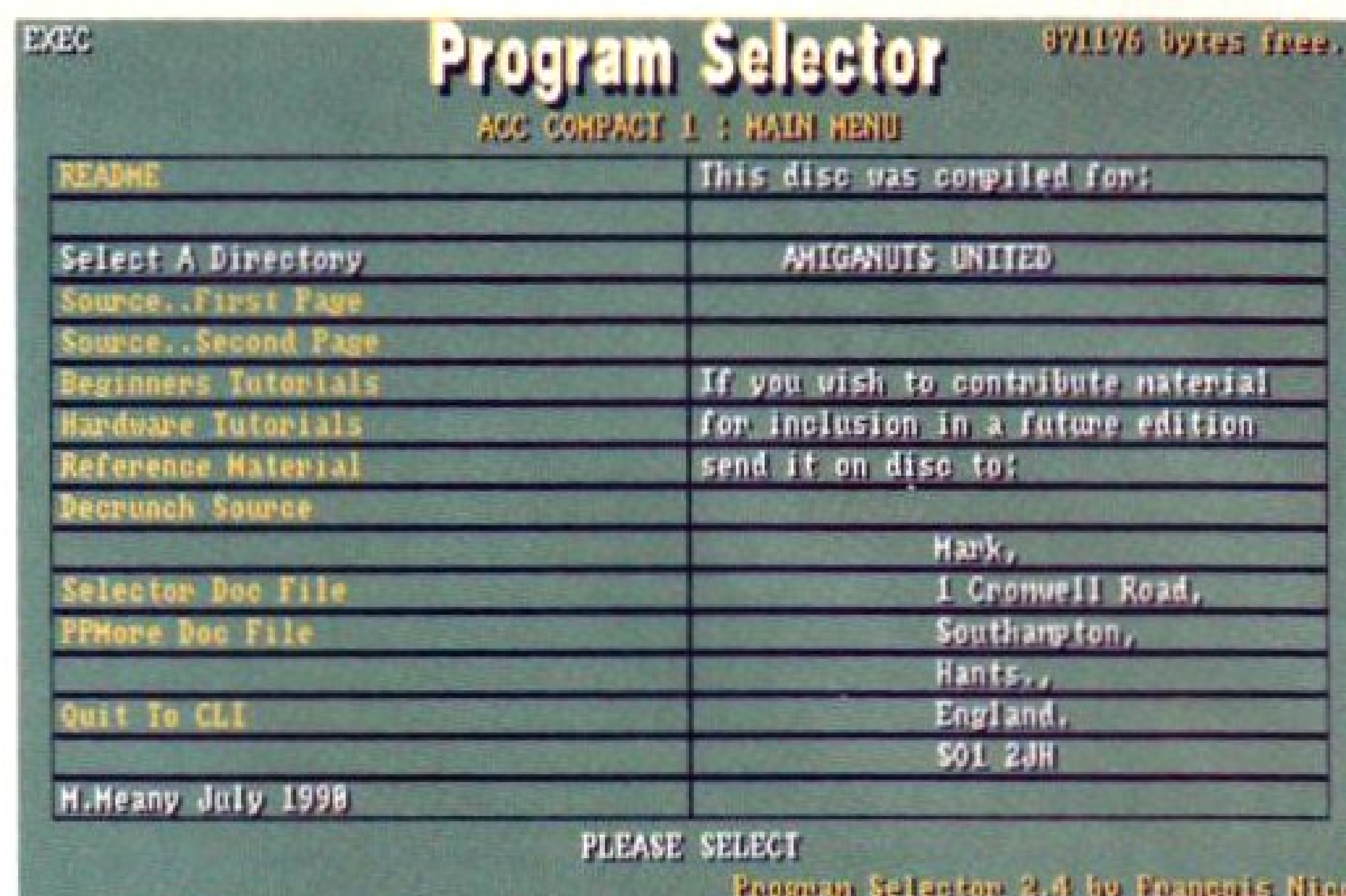
This is hot. It's fresh, young, and unfettered, mainly because the author sent it straight to me to send out to the PD libraries scattered around the Sceptred Isle (that's the UK to Richard II haters).

AmsMag is a magazine on a disk. No, it's actually quite a good one. It has the facility to combine graphics, text and music into a set of pages, with a contents page at the front. You can flick through it and you don't need to do disk swapping. I understand it's popular with Amiga owners down under.

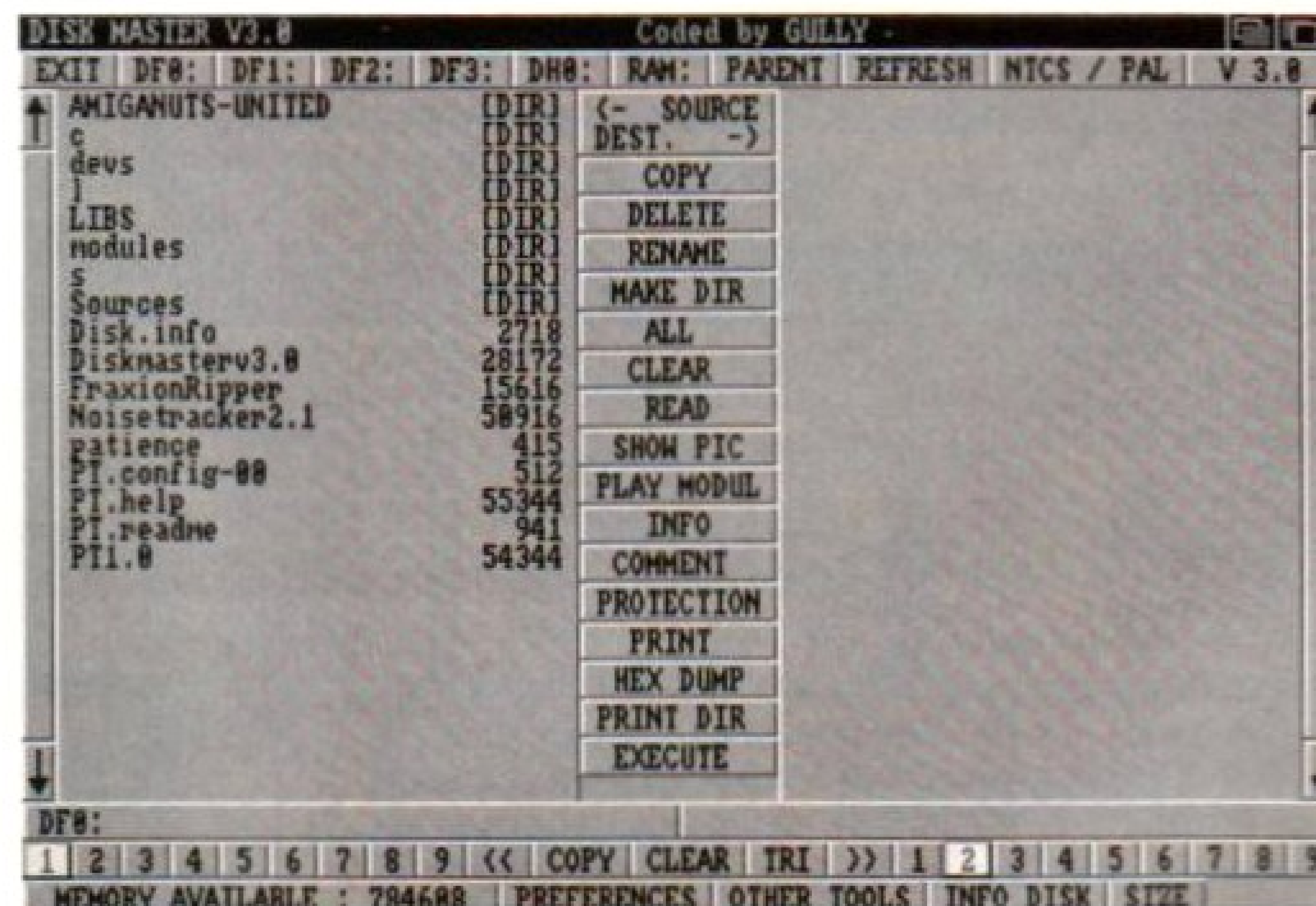
Now, the PD part of all this is that Mark Gladding has put the editor for his magazine – *Magnetic Pages* – into the Public



Font2Sculpt allows you to render with text to make surreal images.



The ACC1 disk from Amiganuts contains lots of documentation and source code for would-be machine coders.



On the Amiganuts Utilities disk, *DiskMaster V3* might not seem the most amazing program – until you try to get along without it.

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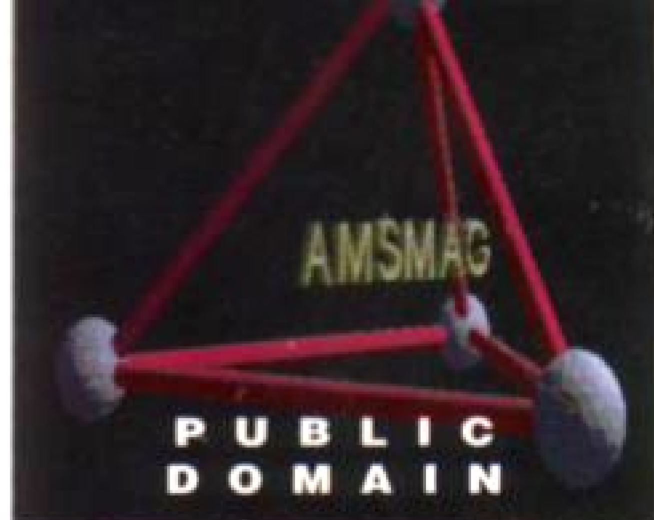
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Domain, with the exception of the organiser program. This is a necessary part of the system, and costs $25 US. Contact Mark at 66 Churchill Road, Murrays Bay, Auckland 10, New Zealand. As yet the displayer and editor programs are not available, but I dare say they will find their way into most of the libraries.



The AMSMAG front cover – not the most amazing piccie I've seen, but it's the fact that it's there at all that matters.

UTILITIES
AMIGANUTS 793

There's a weird and wonderful collection on this one. *CRobots* is a game played by C programmers – you write your own program in C to provide an on-screen robot with intelligence, which then fights other robots to the death with cannons and missiles. Originally written on the PC by Tom Poindexter, this Amiga version was written by David Wright. Note that it needs arp.library version 34 or higher on your Workbench disk to work correctly.

If you've ever encountered GIF picture files and want to display them on your Amiga, HAMsharp by Ken C M Lau will do the job. Amgif by Steve Bennett will perform the opposite translation, converting standard Amiga IFF files into GIF format.

Continuing the line-up is the full set of updated *Kramden Utilities* by Bill Barton. These are quite useful if you want to include such clever things as a clock or a memory meter display in your Startup-sequence for use on your Workbench.

At the tail end, *IconJ* is Rich Franzen's rewritten version of *IconX* that's fully compatible but includes a few new features, like output to files, full support for conditional execution, interaction from the keyboard and ARexx support without running another program.

Demos Corner

Hello to Nutts, Ste, Stevie, Ben, Bym, Skippy, Alyn and Clare. Now just wobble the page backwards and forwards and you've got a scrolly greets message. Dead easy, isn't it? Now that's out of the way, we don't need to do it on the Amiga. Right, on with the good stuff.



SPACE SLIDESHOW
MP VISUALS

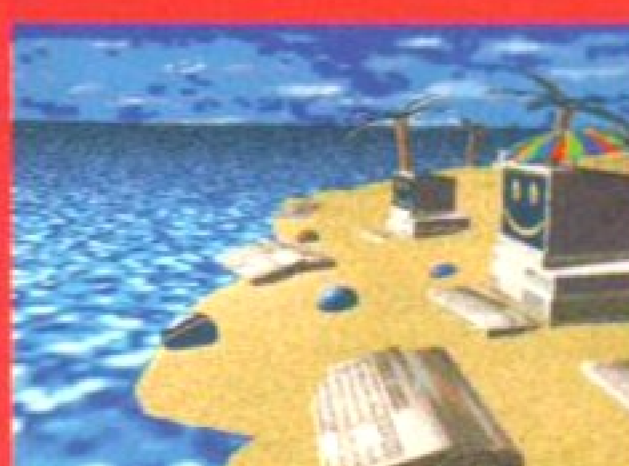
For those of you with a penchant for outer-space type stuff, this little slideshow from MP Visuals could be just the ticket. The disk features some rather well-drawn scenes combining fantasy landscapes and NASA satellites. Ground control to Major Maff... how do you boot this?



SPACE FIGHT ANIMATION
17-BIT DISK 747

This little snippet features an animation by J Smith of Byte by Byte Corporation. The scene is a huge space station and two ships are locked in a deadly chase over the station's surface. The display isn't incredibly detailed and the anim is a bit on the short side, but the sci-fi battle atmosphere is well worth digging the disk out for.



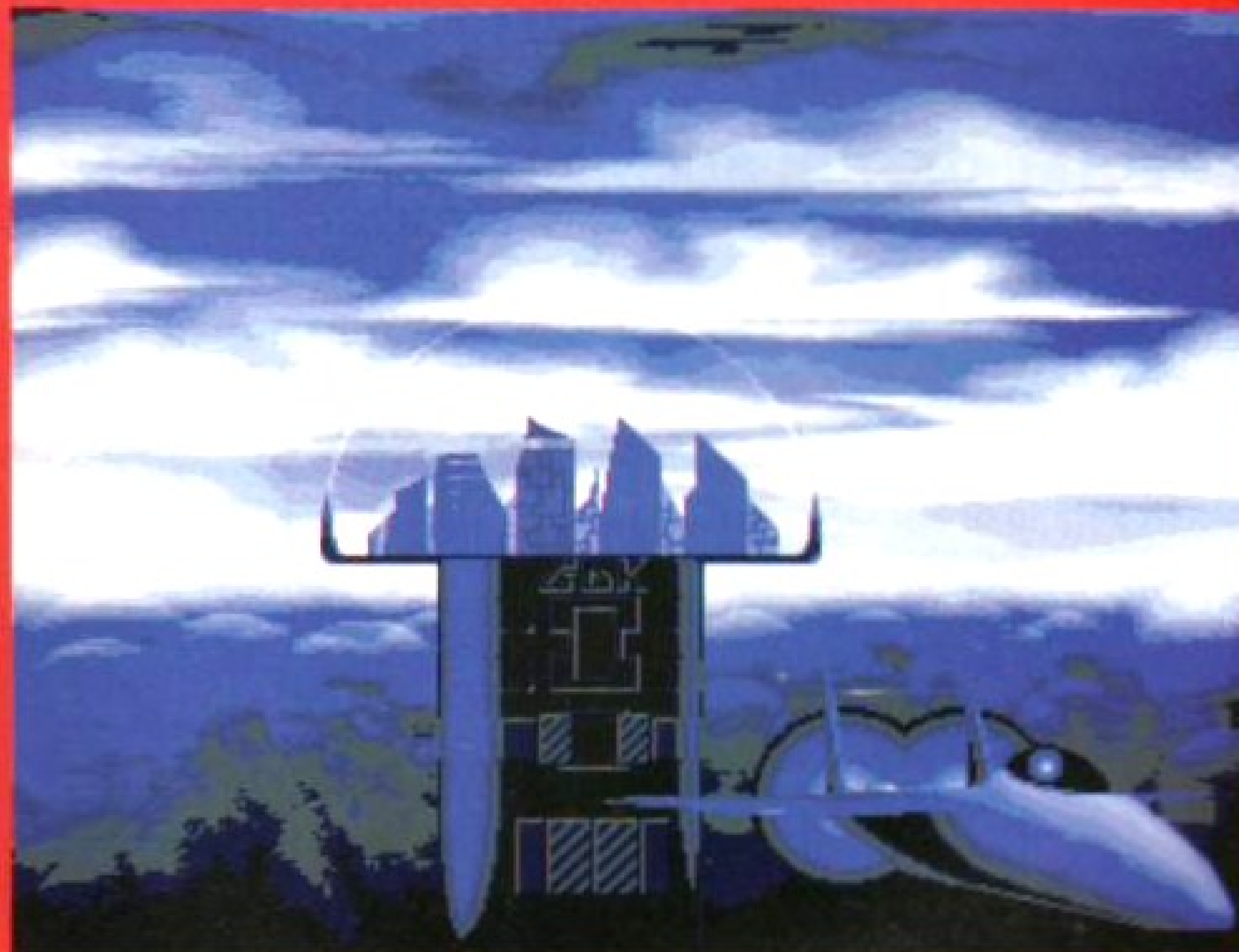


C-DRYK SLIDESHOW
17-BIT DISK 761

This neat little disk contains some very nicely drawn pictures, ranging from the Flying Dutchman via science fiction scenes to *Robocop*. The music that backs it up is pretty run-of-the-mill, but the artwork is worth a shuftie.

AGATRON ANIMATIONS
AMIGANUTS DISKS 780, 781
17-BIT DISK 734

These disks contain a selection of those classic *Star Trek* animations by Tobias Richter. These are actually snippets from his forthcoming epic compilation of his animations into a full-length video performance. Disk 780 features yet more images from various periods of *Trek* in the form of a HAM slideshow, containing scenes from the animations and some other rather nice screens – and very pretty they are too!



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George Thompson Services are collaborating with MegaDisc of Australia and JumpDisk in the USA to make a new collection for worldwide distribution. Called the Best of British, the new 'label' will feature *Font2Sculpt* as number three in its forthcoming catalogue.

Is all this going to break the Fish monopoly on international PD libraries? Probably not, but then as the size of any PD library is theoretically infinite and is available to anybody anywhere to give to anyone else, it's not really a valid question. That is, Fish don't have a monopoly: it's just a good PD library that does a lot of business.

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Demos Corner

DEPECHE MODE DEMO
17-BIT DISK 696

All you Depeche Mode fans out there make a careful note of the disk number and leave it well alone! Cyclone have managed to get together some fine songs and murder every single one of them. Hearing this rendition of *Never Let Me Down Again* was just too much to bear. Aargh! TURN IT OFF!

UPFRONT DEMO
AMIGANUTS DISK 765

A rather weird and wonderful variation on the copper theme. Instead of just bouncing another pan-pipe-like pattern around, this disk features some incredibly psychedelic moving patterns – from undulating mathematical surfaces to blooming and spreading shaded squares. Wow! Freak out, maaan!

DIGITAL CONCERT 6
RIVERDENE PDL

Agh! It's a scrolly message! Never mind, just close your eyes and ignore the dull visuals, because this demo contains an excellent 'Mega Mix'...

What does that mean? 'Mega Mix'? What you really mean is medley, isn't it? Go on, admit it! Oh, all right then... a medley. But a fine, beaty, amusing little example of a medley! Check out the Hiawatha vocals with a dance beat. Great fun!

C64 MUSIC DEMO
17-BIT DISK 758

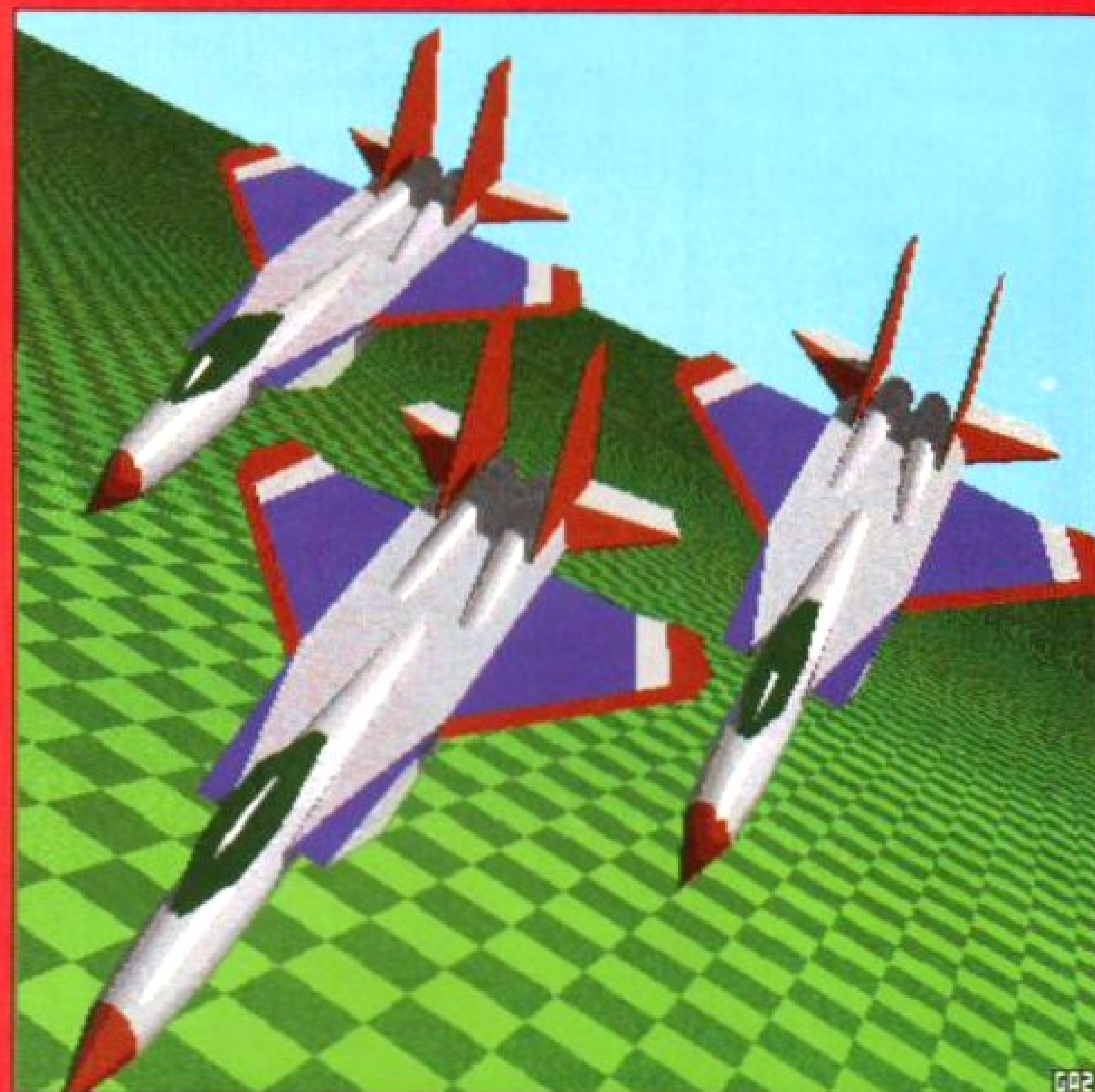
This is for those of you who moved up to the Amiga from the classic Commodore 64. The demo starts off playing a little ditty backed with some classic C64 game loading screens. Hit the mouse button and you are presented with an extensive list of games, from which all the tunes have been hacked ready for you to listen to. Ah... takes me back to the days when I'd sit there for hours listening to the *Parallax* music!

GARY TOWER SLIDESHOW
17-BIT DISK 727

If you want to see ray-tracing in full effect, then simply check out this disk. No fancy coppers, no mega-loaders, just those simple, superb pictures. Well, what a refreshing change!

BRUCE LEE SLIDESHOW
PENDLE EUROPA

Hayaaa! Heeee-Ha-waaaah! Thud! Ow! Never mind, if actually doing Kung-Fu sounds like too painful an experience, then just admire the master himself with this little slideshow. The pictures are grey-scale digitised shots from the Bruce Lee book, backed by a boppy tune scattered with all manner of blood-curdling shrieks.





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562 - Van Gells Demo*
564 - Digimovie Number One XXX
565 - Digiview Slide show
567 - Subbuteo Preview
575 - TFA Music sample disk
580 - PC Boyz Music Disk
581 - Martin Galway Music Show
582 - Wonderland Arcade Game
583 - Scare crows story
586 - Light Cycle* @2
588 - Flash Mega demo @2
590 - Punisher Playable Preview
591 - Blood Sports II
592 - Miami Vice Theme
593 - Crocketts Theme
594 - Fantasy Art Slide Show
596 - Vision Born To be cool
597 - Erotica Pictures disk No 1 XXX
599 - Abel Mega demo Disk
600 - Pan demo III
601 - Bacteria demo
602 - Get to the safe House
603 - Tread Mega Demo @3
606 - Scoopex Collection disk No 70
607 - Psychedelia Demo By Rasor 1911
608 - Deadly Pursuits No 42
609 - Powerlords Power Musix II*
611 - Vangelis Demo*
612 - Monty Pythons Nudge Nudge @2
614 - Debbie Gibson Electric Youth @2
616 - Ipeceve Music
618 - Powerlords Power Music No 1
620 - Laurel and Hardy show Real @2
623 - Scoopex collection disk No 71
624 - Too Much 3D Animation disk
625 - Maniacs of Noise music pack III
626 - Prime 90 Music @2
628 - Maniacs of Noise music pack II
629 - Bionix II, The Challenge
630 - Onyx Music disk
632 - Playboy August Issue* @2
635 - 100 Origial C64 Titles
638 - Donna Edmonson Animation
640 - Porky Pig Animation disk*
641 - Disordel Mega Demo Disk
642 - Maniacs of Noise Music pack No 1
643 - Revelation Playable Preview
644 - Blonde Beauties XXX
646 - Patrol boat animation
648 - Jailbreak Slideshow
649 - Wildlife Playable Preview
650 - Rosanne Arquette Slideshow*
652 - Gold of the Aztecs Preview
653 - Bathine Beanties @2
656 - Days of Thunder Animation
657 - Plotting Playable Preview
658 - The Flame Arrows Vocal Attack
659 - Final Assult II
660 - End of the Century 1999 II
661 - Flash Productions Digital Concert 5
662 - Crionics mega demo disk
664 - Budbrain Mega demo disk @2
666 - Brainstorm mega demo disk
667 - Cronics 'Neverwhere' Mega Demo
668 - Rebels Candyland Volume 19.0
669 - Hogar the Horrible Preview
671 - Digitial Concert 6
672 - Scoopex Demo Collection disk No 80
673 - Battle Command Playable Preview
674 - Epic Animation*
678 - Good Moring Vietham Remix
679 - More From the BK Demo Competition. See Disk 560*
681 - Big Breed Picture disk
682 - Big Als The Girls of Sport XXX
683 - Bash one: Dirty Picture disk XXX
684 - Ecstasy Pleasure Pack No 30
686 - Sound of Silents
687 - James Pond Preview
688 - Back to the future III Playable Preview
689 - Technotronic Remix
690 - Popeye meets the Beach Boys
692 - Wrath of the Demon Preview
693 - Sam Fox Slideshow XXX
695 - Dragon Lord Preview
696 - Murder Preview
697 - Canine Preview
698 - Super Off Road Racer Preview
699 - 3D Internation Soccer Preview
700 - Horror Zombie Preview
701 - Anarchy Collection
702 - Charles Dance Music collection
703 - Have a Laugh pictures XXX
704 - Awesome Preview
705 - Wolfpack Preview
706 - Exoret music collection
707 - Preview Pack collection
709 - Diggy Piggy @2
711 - Ghost and Goblins music
712 - Beach Volly Demo by Paradox
713 - Pseudo cop Game
714 - Raiders of the lost ark animation
715 - Evil Dead II Sample Disk @2
717 - Rebals Megablast
718 - Midnight Sun
720 - Vaxine playable preview
721 - Wings of death playable preview
722 - Anarchy Demo collection
725 - Ghost pool animation
726 - Partners in crime demos no 27
730 - Scoopex 84 collection
731 - Silkworm 4 playable preview
732 - Billy The Kid Preview
733 - PMC Fractal animation
734 - Clothes peg animation

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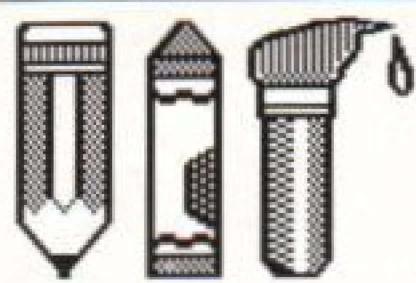
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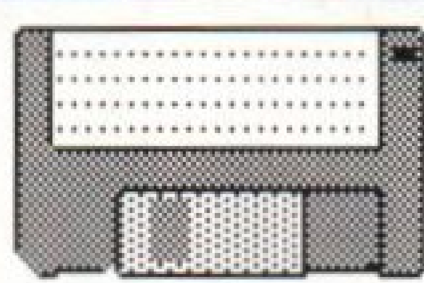
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FFISH 342 – IE V1.0 is an icon editor up to 640x200 pixels in size also dual render. Fully featured.
FFISH 244 – Boot Block Champion V3.1 load, save and analyze boot blocks. BootIntro V1.2 you specify The headline text of upto 44 characters and the scrolling text of upto 300.
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TBAG 28 – MachII features: configurable, your help screen, mouse accelerator, PopCLI, Screen Blanker, Mouse OFF, Sun Mouse, Click To Front, Cycle, Window and Screen Shuffler, CLock, Alarm, Beeper etc.
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FFISH 195 – Micro Emacs V3.10 the editor which is very comprehensive.Includes source and extensive on line documentation.
FFISH 219 – Deep Sky V5.0 is a database containing info on 10,368 non–stellar objects, 600 colour contrasting easily resolved double stars, 70 stars for setting circles and miscellaneous white dwarfs, red starsetc. The whole lot is ZOOd (archived) down to fit onto the disk and will unZOO to 1.2 Mb of info. ZOO is not supplied.

PDOM Clip It! Vol1. Nearly 3Mb of clip art in standard IFF format. Subjects covered are varied but are mainly: sports, flags, animals, cartoons, humorous, Christmas, Jewish, borders, Halloween, Valentines, horses, eyes, alphabets, hands, 1930's trade marks, zodiac, cars and many more. All compatible with DPaint II. All in black and white. 5 disks full.

Miscellaneous

PDOM 211 – NorthC the latest all features excellent C compiler. Suitable for beginners and the knowledgable alike. Fully comprehensive.
FFISH 337 – CManual V1.0 is a complete C manual for the Amiga which describes how to open and work with screens, windows, graphics, gadgets, requesters, alerts, menus, IDCMP, sprites, etc. Includes huge manual file and over 70 fully executable examples with source code. When unpacked fills up 3 disks.
FFISH 314 – A68k v2.61 the 68000 macro assembler. Excellent.
FFISH 339 – PCQ V1.1cis a freely redistributable, self compiling, Pascal compiler. The only major feature of Pascal that is not implemented is sets.
FFISH 349 – MED V2.0 is a music editor much like SoundTracker with MIDI sequencing.
AMP11 – 5 disks full of Sonix files with the PD Sonix player. £12.50!
AMP23 – 5 disks full of Soundtracker files includes Sound Tracker versions 1,2,3 and 4. £12.50!
PDOM 285 – Game Music Creator. Supports MIDI, can handle all types of samples –IFF with loops, Raw etc., both contignous and pattern recording, Note half stepup/down function, 64 patterns in memory, can load both Soundtracker & SoundFX songs (converted with GMC conv.), Replay routine brutally much faster than Soundtrackers, Includes Pattern break, Position jump etc etc...

Demos

PDOM 212 – Red Sector CEBIT '90 demo. Another excellent demo from RSI!
PDOM 213 – Rebels Coma demo an absolutely brilliant non stop demo totally different, and very original!
PDOM 214 – Fractal Flight. Created by HyperCube Engineerings' fractal landscape generator Requires 1MB RAM BRILLIANT!
PDOM 148 – Escape from Singes Castle another amazing animation demo of the interactive game. Excellent follow up to Space Ace!
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PDOM 65 & PDOM 66 Red Sector Mega Demo. THE best demo on the Amiga! Amazing graphics, fabulous sounds, astounding vector graphics!
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PDOM 74 – Star Trek 4 animations of Star Trek craft.
PDOM 76 – Star Trek Shuttle landing on a Star Trek craft.
PDOM 83 – Space Ace demo. Excellent aniamtion with excellent sampled sound!.

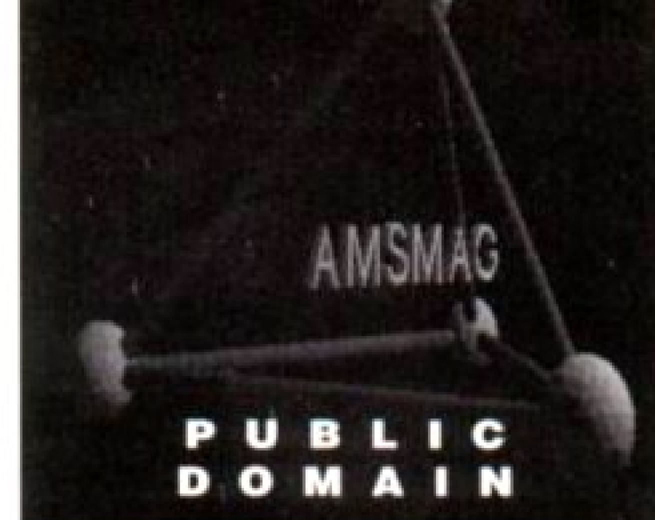
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Stateside Special

A privileged look at an American PD library with **PAT McDONALD**, who likes what he sees at Premier.

Who is Roy Tretheway? No, he's not a comic book character, but already it's questionable whether he exists in this 3D reality which we're all so familiar with.

He runs a PD library, but not just any PD library: possibly the best-quality library anywhere. Premier Software is one of the best-packaged and the most sensible catalogues around. UK PD libraries frequently have hundreds of different titles. Roy gets away with just 85.

The secret? Specialisation. Each set of disks is aimed at one specific use and no other. There are a few compilations of utilities, but even these are tied together somewhere down the line. There are none of those bouncy-wobbly-wibbly demos which do absolutely nothing except send greetings from one obscure illiterate software pirate to another.

For instance, the "Something for Nothing" series are always compilations of graphics and video tools. Each disk has a list of the contents printed on a colour label (which Roy designs himself). No scrawled, obscure disk numbers with unknown contents. The label also has the title printed on the edge, which makes flicking to the right disk an undemanding job.

One of Premier's home-grown "own products" is Deskbench. It's exactly compatible with Workbench, with the exception that it looks better – a couple of expansion disks let you set up your own Deskbench systems with relative ease. More of that later.

How do you get hold of Premier's software? At the present time, they don't have a UK distributor. In theory, this means sending off an International Monetary Order to California for the correct cost in dollars.

And how much does it cost? Roy charges $5.75 per disk to foreign customers (ie us Brits), plus an Air Mail delivery charge of $5. At around $1.94 per £1, that's... erm... a reasonable charge really. Actually, he'll happily accept bankdrafts or IMOs for pounds sterling. The rate is £2.50 for a single disk, £5 for a two disk set, £12 for four disks or £11 for five. Don't forgot the £3 delivery charge. Here's a brief look at just what Premier offers:

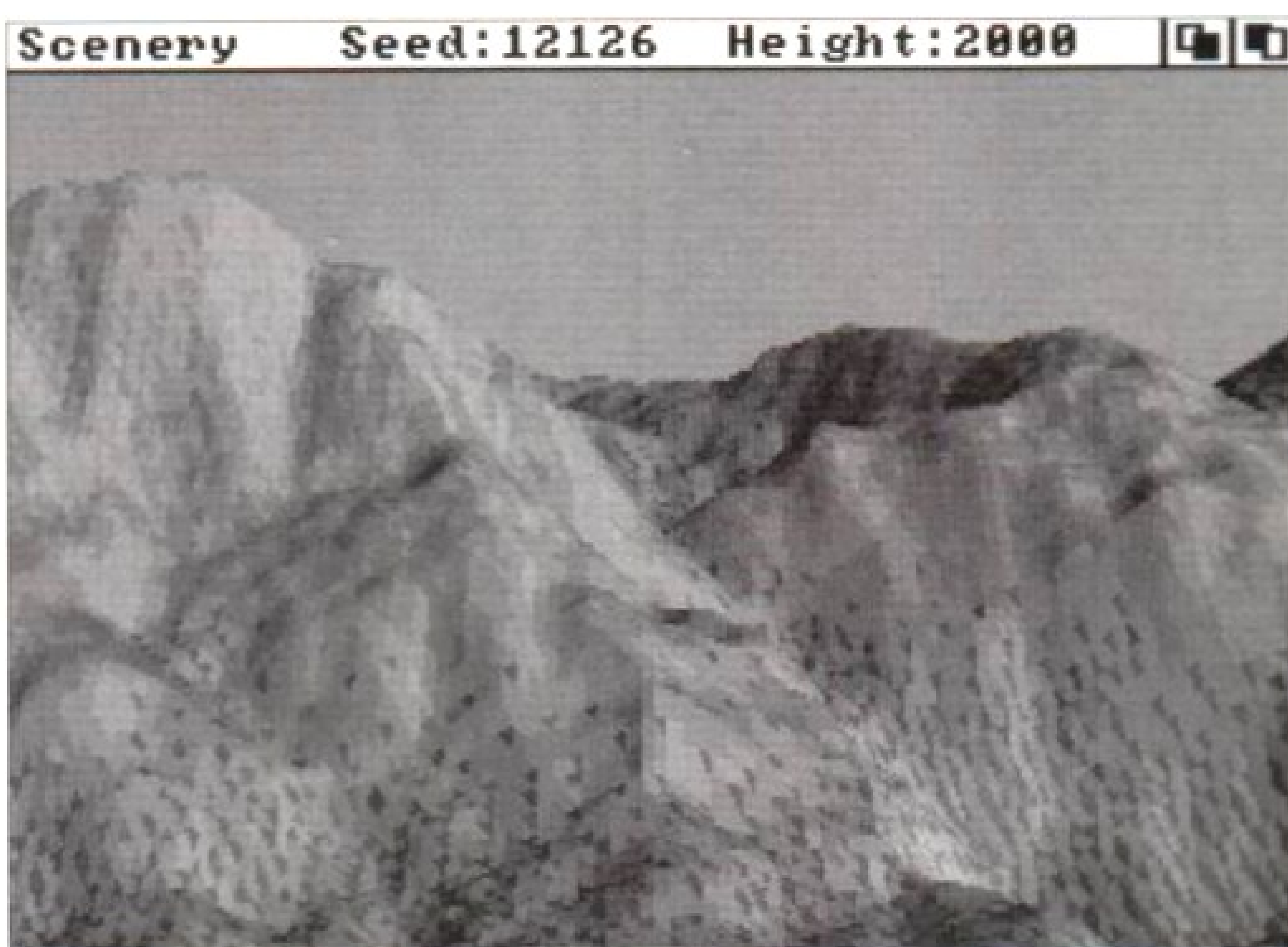
DESKBENCH FACTORY

Deskbench itself is a dead ringer for Workbench. The difference is that Deskbench offers a much more attractive layout and display system. Rather than the Workbench method of displaying separate icons in different directories and windows, Deskbench offers an integrated look that's not easy to describe.

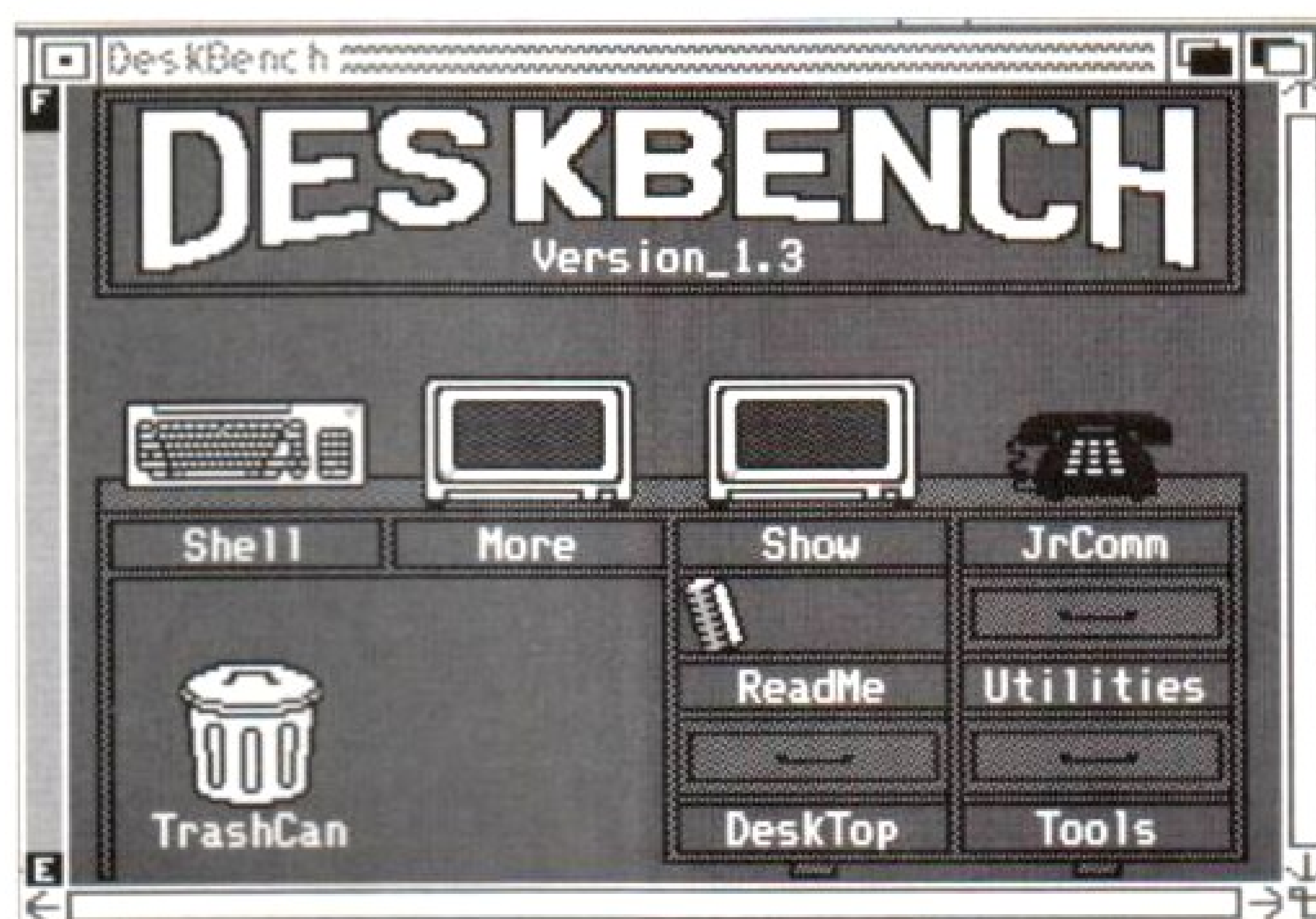
Each icon makes up part of a recognisable whole. Deskbench looks like a desk: the communications software is a telephone icon, sitting on top of the desk. The trashcan is stuck underneath. The drawers on either side of the desk contain further desks and programs. Check out the picture to see just what I'm talking about.

Deskbench Factory comes on two separate disks crammed with cleverly-designed icons and windows for making your own disks look like desks, rather than windows with icons on.

What's the point? By using such a display system, somebody who has never used a WIMP system (or a computer) can see just what is available, in a form which they can recognise. There is an argument that says "Deskbench is just a toy", but for somebody who isn't familiar with Workbench it's a lot easier to work with.



12121 entered into fractal landscape generator *Scenery* produces this landscape. Not a lot of people know that.



Deskbench offers an attractive and simple alternative to Workbench.



Freom the Something for Nothing collection, *Introducer* is good for designing program introductions – surprise, surprise!

SOMETHING FOR NOTHING

SFN is an invaluable collection of tools for messing about with graphics. It comes on two disks: the first contains an impressive list of gadgets. For animation, you get *Capture, StrpAnim* and *Display.* Video tools are *BarsnTone, Lace, Lacer, TimeCalc* and *VTOT*. Graphics widgets are the famous *ScreenX, SuperView, Cube, Planet, Scenery, DFilter, TitleGen* and *Peel.* Finally come the diagnostics: *Monitor and VPG*. What a list! What a bargain!

Disk Two contains "only" *Introducer, Showiz, IFF-Display, SportsText, ABridge,* and *TV-Graphics*. Of course, these are much bigger programs for actually producing pictures and demos, rather than the tools for simple fixes included on Disk One.

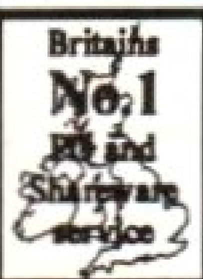
The only problemette with this lot is that they are all for NTSC format. That is, on European PAL Amigas only the top 200 lines of the display are used.

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SOF118 - GRAVATTACK, BULLRUN, WORLD etc.
SOF186 - LARN (the giant) ADVENTURE
SOF396 - TENNIS, great shareware PRG (1meg)
SOF501 - (2disks £5)STARTREK, brilliant PD version. (1meg, 2drives)
SOF521 - PSEUDO COP, great game from Pseudo-Ops
SOF530 - SkyFight, Bleed, Shhotout (not v1.37)
FF357 - EMPIRE, new version multi-player game. Keyboard or modem
FF347 - DRIP, arcade style game, dodge the pipes etc. Good!
FF320 - AMIOMEGA, similar to Hack but more complex.
FF312 - CHINACHALLENGE, shanghai game, MOONBASE lunar lander.
FF259 - Escape From Jovi, fast action game, multi-levels.

PICTURES

SOF16 - 18 digitised HAM pictures, classics
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SOF197 - BARBARIAN ladies, fabulously drawn
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LANGUAGES

FF351 - PDC, publicly distributable C, complete
FF347 - CURSOR, 3pass AmigaBASIC compiler
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FF140 - StoneyBrook PROLOG - needs both disks (below)
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SOF33 - NEMESIS, HBHILL, Viacom, Wavebench etc.
SOF34 - ROCKER, KAHNANKAS, BERSERK
SOF40 - WALKING LEGS, brilliantly done!
SOF54 - (2disks/drives £5) NEWTEK, original (1meg)
SOF56 - DOC'S DEMON demo, original but good!
SOF70 - BOING!, SPROING!, JUGGLER, TILT etc. etc.
SOF154 - EL GATO, RED BARON, FSW (1meg)
SOF219 - 2 disk, 2meg vers the WALKER demo (£5)
SOF254 - 1meg version of the classic WALKER demo
SOF255 - 1meg version of WALKER2, the follow up.
SOF414 - PUGGS IN SPACE, cute anim' well done
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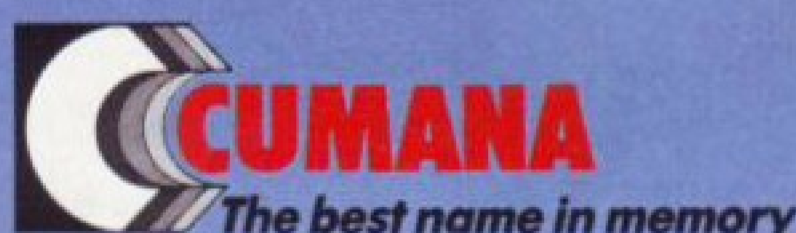
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Game Busters

It's getting towards Christmas and all those new goodies, but don't you think it would be good to get to grips with the games you have already? Clear away those half-finished game blues with **MAFF EVANS**.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II

After breaking ground with the cheat mode for this impressive sequel, *Amiga Format* is proud to present... (cue music) DA-DA-DAAA...! The solution! Okay, let's get down to it, boppers...

From the start head left, watching out for the hands throwing the crystal balls from the trees. Cross the bridge, carefully judging the timing to avoid the leaping fish, and shoot the demon to save the man trapped in the field. Ask him about TRAPS and he will be able to tell you about either a higher or lower switch.

Go left and down (watch for the bats). Land on the left ledge and duck to avoid the flying demon. Chase him to the right and kill him before he can cut the rope. Let the man pushing the block get close to the edge, then kill him. Go left avoiding the falling blocks and kill the demon on the hill to the left. Go back to the right and the demon will have dropped a key. Head back to the left and drop off the edge, but watch out for the flying demon.

Go up the rope, head right and use the key to open the door. Now go right watching for another falling block. When you eventually come to the switches, hit whichever one the man you freed told you about.

Go up the lift, go right (avoiding the bats) past the chain leading down, through two open doors to the next chain. Go up the chain into the alcove and collect the bonuses. Go back down the chain and continue right to collect the key. Go left and down the chain, taking care not to wake the sleeping guard. Use the key to let the beast free from the cage and hit the lower switch on the right. Now head back to the lift and board it to head down.

The switch that you hit should have caused a bridge to appear. Go left across it and use the three levers on the right to operate the claw. Pick up the rock with the claw and drop it on the spike in the floor on the right. And now push the remaining, smaller rock onto the see-saw over to the right and climb the rope, jumping off to land on the other side of the see-saw. Run to the other lift and you will go up.

Go right to kill Ishran, then free the prisoner, who will tell you the password. Go to the gateway to Barloom's domain and whisper the password. Go right to collect a bonus then up the rope to collect a parchment from Barloom. Leave and head left past the rope. Look out for the giants with maces and collect the bonus.

Enter the hut and go right to collect the ale, then leave the hut and return to the game's starting point. Head right, watching for the pygmies (remember the cheat mode here, kids) and head diagonally up to the left on the stepping-stones. Watch out for the jelly-firing monster on the bridge and collect the bonus. Kill the monster to get the axe and head diagonally up to the right for another bonus. Go back down the way you came and head left until you find a covered hole. Jump on the cover (taking care not to land on the platform above) and you should drop through.

Go left, dodging the crystals that pop up from the water and collecting all the bonuses on the way. Chase the goblin to the left until you reach the drawbridge. Switch to axe and jump to shoot at the bloke winding up the bridge, but remember the time limit on the axes and keep piling them at the bloke. Switch back to the mace to kill the other goblin and smash through the door.







WARNING!

Do not play this game if you are of a nervous disposition

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Go left and up, then hit the switch to turn off the spikes. Go left and crouch to hit the switch on the right. Go right, down, left and down, then kill the the goblins. Go right, collect the key, then go left and under the cage. Oops! Captured! Never mind...

To escape from prison, offer the ale to the goblin and use the mace to break the cage door. Go up to the top and go left. Kill the goblins to collect the ring, then go down and kill the sleeping guard to collect the key. Go back and release the remaining prisoner in the cell above yours. Go back down to collect your mace again, then go up and to the right. Use the remaining key to open the door then go right looking out for the spikes. Leave the caves and return to the surface.

Go right, down, then right and kill the giant head. Go right, up the rope and right, looking out for the bats. Go down the rope then right across the bridge. Get the giant lizard-man to follow you left back across the bridge so that he falls through. Go right (jumping over the hole the lizard-man has just made) and carry on heading right until you reach the old man. Offer the old man the ring and the parchment and collect the weapon he makes – this is the one to use from now on.

Go left and drop through the hole in the bridge. Head right watching out for the bats, then go down and collect the bonus. Go right onto the rope, then right again onto the ledge to collect the horn. Go back left and down the rope, then quickly jump out of that nice healthy acid and head right. When you reach the snail, ask him about KARAMOON and answer 'yes' to both his questions.

Head off back to the surface and once there go right, looking out for the twin giants hurling axes. Go right, over the cliff edge, then right, killing the giant toads. But look out for the giant serpent in its nest! Now walk to the sea edge and use the horn to call the sea-beast. Climb onto its back, then right and enter the tower. Go right, down the stairs then up the adjacent stairs to collect the bonus. Go down, then right and it's time for the big battle!

If you can defeat Zelek the Beast Mage, then you've completed the adventure. If you can't then... err... you're dead, I suppose.

S Csoka,
Andreas, Isle of Man

MONTY PYTHON





Never mind about that, miss. Miss? I'm sorry I have a cold. Anyway, on with the hint. Does that little tree that follows you around annoy you? Well, never mind – it's just Mr Johnson trying not to be seen. If you really want to get rid of him, though, just go to the right until the screen starts to scroll, then run towards the left of the screen. Then the tree will be dead. It will cease to be. It will be an ex-tree.It will snuff it. *That's enough! It isn't a parrot.*

Ah, the Norwegian Blue, lovely bird, beautiful plumage. *That may be the case but it ain't a parrot.*

SHUT UP! Bloody Vikings.

Ben Cowdall,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire

SPHERICAL

This amusing little puzzle game, which according to games-playing myth and legend was 'inspired' by *Solomon's Key*, can be a mite tricky at the best of times, not to mention frustrating when you want to get straight to a particular level. Want to stop all that hassle? Want to make your life about fifteen squillion times easier? Then listen carefully to this tip...

All you have to do is type BladeRunner on the title screen and you can use the left and right cursor keys to move forwards and backwards through the levels.

Tim and Matthew Whitby,
Buckhurst Hill, Essex

NEW ZEALAND STORY

Yes, I know there's already been quite a lot of stuff on the Kiwi epic from Ocean already, but this is worth some space.

All you have to do while playing the game is find a place with spikes and jump towards them. When you are about half a centimetre away (on one of the early series monitors, like the 1084B – the one without the ratchetted V-hold button, of course) type the following:

JOHANN GAMBOLPUTTY DE VON AUSFERN SCHPLENDEN SCHLITTER CRASCRENBON FRIED DIGGERDINGLEDANGLEDONGLEDUNGLEWURST BURSTEIN VON KNACKERTHRASHER APPLEBANGER HOROWITZ TICOLENSIC GRANDERKNOTTY SPELLTINKLE GRANDLICH MITTLER AUCHER OF ULM

There should be no spaces (except the ones between some of the words). This will cause the kiwi to fly upwards while painting itself purple and playing 'When Will I be Famous' on the banjo.

We couldn't get this to work on the pre-pro copy we have in the office, but possibility it only works on the version in the *Batman* pack.

Jonathan Longden,
Bingley, West Yorkshire

HAMMERFIST





Right... into this room... belt these monitors and... what's going on? Let me through! Damn! Got it wrong.

If this is a familiar scene to you when you're playing *Hammerfist* then this tip is for you! Just play the game enough to get onto the score table, then die. Enter your name as TAEHC OT TNAW I, then start a new game. Now all you have to do to skip levels is press F7.

Kenneth Pryde,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland

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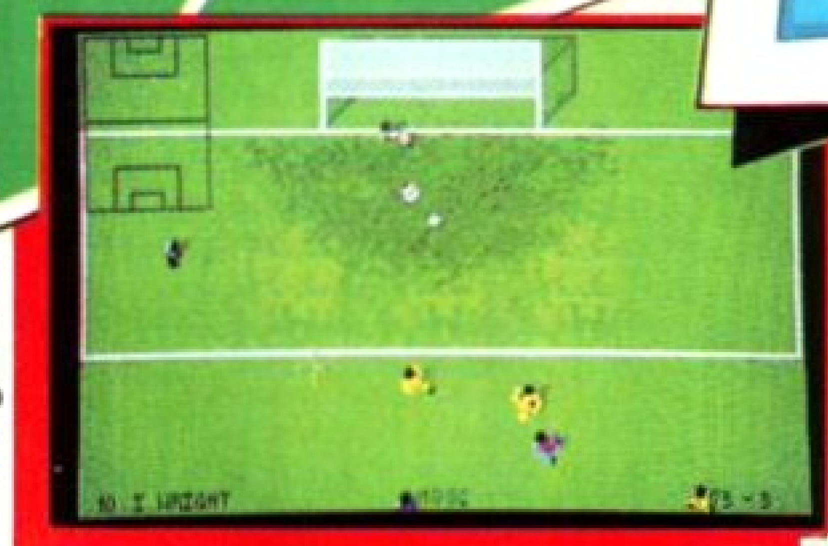


KICK OFF 2



A NEW DI
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Amiga Screen Shots





- BLISTERING PACE
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- SUPERB TACTICAL GAMEPLAY

KICK OFF 2 greatly enhances the gameplay of KICK OFF, winner of the THE GAME OF THE YEAR in the U.K., and similar awards right across Europe. A host of new features have been added to the ones that enthralled players the world over.

* **Full size multi-directional scrolling pitch with the players, markings etc. in correct proportion.**
* **1 to 4 players option. (Amiga and ST only)**
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* **Instinctive Kick Off joystick controls to dribble, pass, shoot, head or chip the ball and do sliding tackles.**
* **Set piece. FREE KICKS including dummies and the ability to dip the ball or bend the ball round a defensive wall.**
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* **Team selection from a squad of 16 with substitution and a choice of tactics.**
* **League and cup competitions with Extra Time, Injury Time and sudden death penalty shoot outs.**
* **Facility to view, edit and save the Action Replays and create a Golden Shots disc.(Excl. IBM & CBM 64)**
* **Facility to load Player Manager teams and tactics for a single or league game.**
* **Red and yellow cards, 16 different referees, injury time and a host of features to create an atmosphere for a game which is real fun to play.**

ST ACTION - The best game ever to grace the ST. Highest accolade I can give.
AMIGA USER INT - The best computer game ever **97%**
THE ONE - Ultimate soccer simulation. **96%**
THE ACE - Brilliant. Buy, Buy, Buy. **930.**
AMIGA FORMAT - Best footy game to have appeared on any machine. **94%**
ST FORMAT - What a game! Gem to play. Magic. **90%**
C & VG - Championship winning material. **95%**
GAMES MACHINE - Probably the best sports game ever. **92%**
COMMODORE USER - No other footie game can touch it. **90%**
AMIGA ACTION - Surpasses all other football games. **93%**
POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY - Nothing short of brilliant.
NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - Computer football event of the year.

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ST. ACTION - A stroke of pure genius.
THE ONE - An exceptional football management simulation, Astounding depth. Most involved, rewarding and playable.
THE ACE - Successfully blends challenging soccer management with frantic end to end arcade action. **920**
NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - The sheer depth is incredible. A definitive management game.
COMMODORE USER - At last a management game that requires true management skills - a winner. **94%**
ST FORMAT - Brilliant. **93%**
AMIGA FORMAT - Enthralling and addictive. **93%**
ZZAP - Best football management game ever written. **92%**

AMIGA - ST £19.99

ENSION IN
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Raises the skills required and gameplay of KICK OFF 2 to new heights.

Two extra kits.

Look at any player stats. (attributes and skill) before selecting squad.

Totally new corner kicks with full control of the power, height and trajectory of the ball.

Enhanced throw ins and penalty shots.

Provision to flick the ball in the air and do a blinding header or a spectacular overhead kick.

New two players team mode. Player 1 in position or nearest to the ball and player 2 in position or keeper.

Linesmen and referee on the pitch.

A new player attribute FLAIR. A player with a high level of flair will try a solo attempt at the goal.

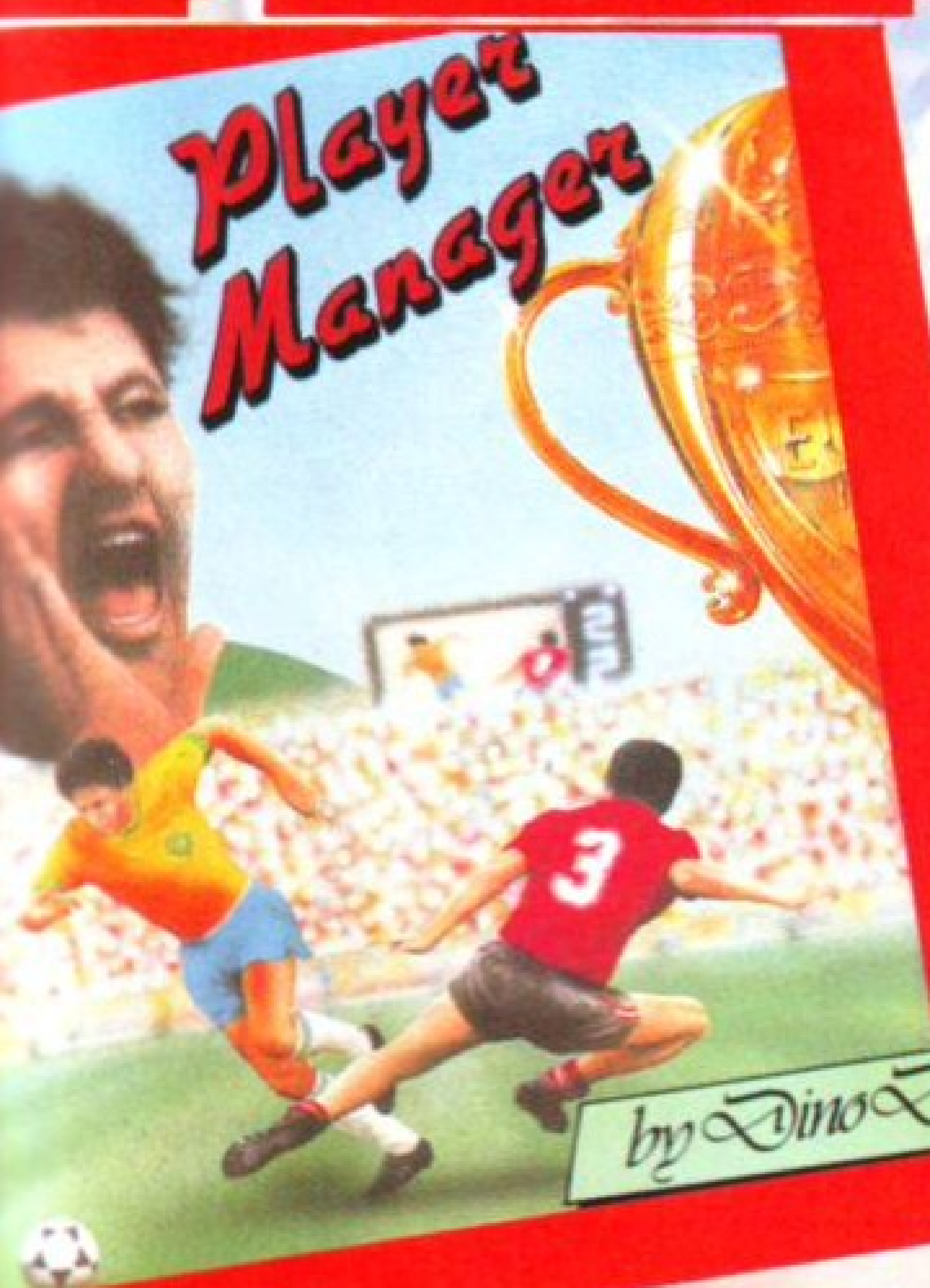
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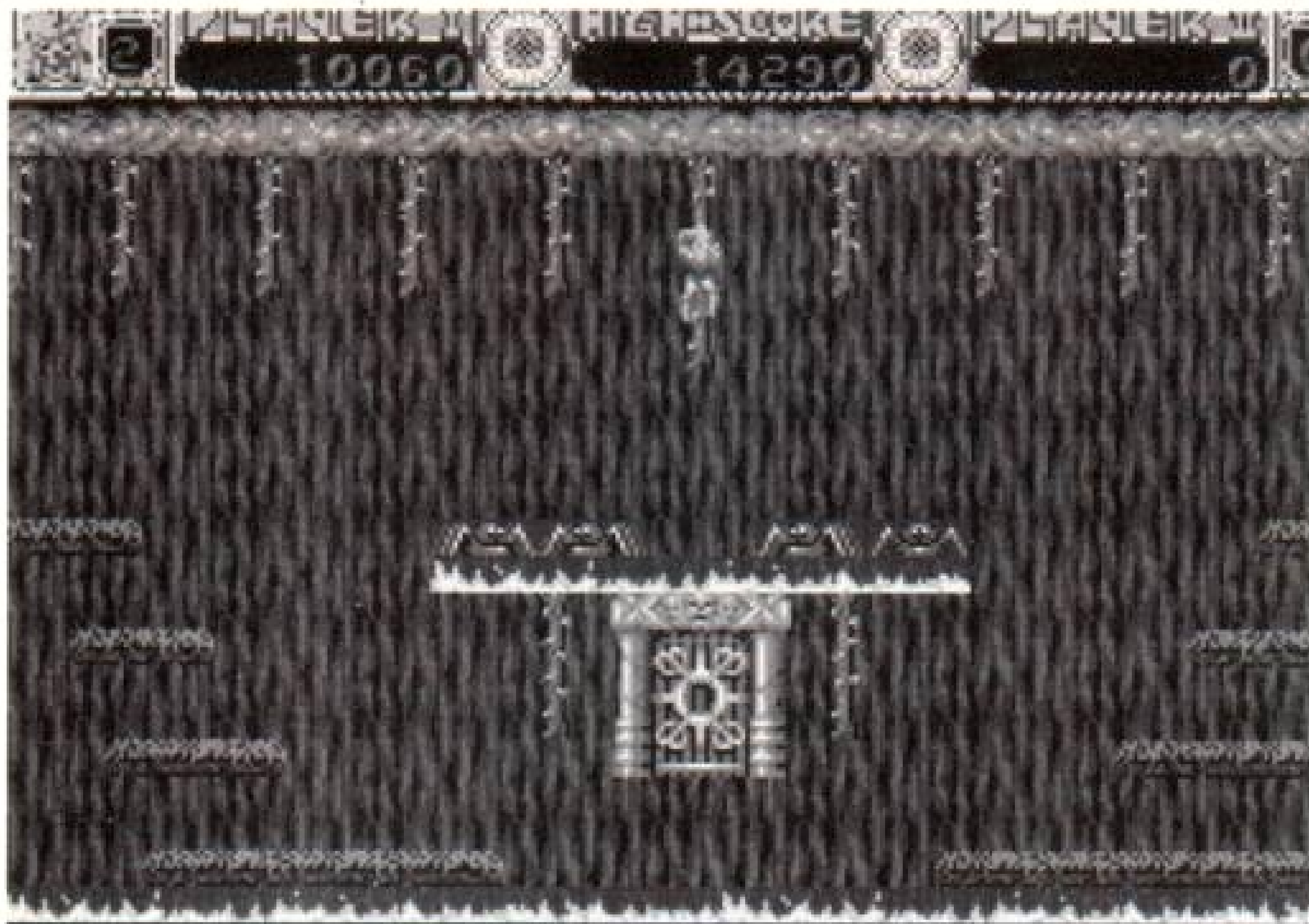
GIANTS OF EUROPE (Rel. 1991) Best teams of Europe on one disc.





Draft specifications. Subject to changes without notice

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YOLANDA COVERDISK DEMO

It looks like there are one or two people out there who have a soft spot for this frustrating platform game, so we've got some tips for the little demo piece we featured on the Coverdisk. Much needed they are, too!

LABOUR ONE

Walk left and jump onto the platform on the left-hand side, then jump onto the rope. Climb to the top of the rope and jump onto the platform, then onto the next two ropes. Jump to the right, so that the platform you land on disappears. Just as you touch the next platform, press fire. The platform will now vanish and if you were quick enough on the fire button you should jump.

Repeat the steps for the next platform and a new platform should appear under you as you begin to fall. Walk right along this platform and jump off the end to the small rope. Jump to the big rope, climb up and jump for the doors. Phew, that's tricky!

LABOUR TWO

Walk along to the right and jump up to the long rope. Climb to the top of the rope and jump along to the row of small ropes, continuing to jump along the row until you reach the end. Drop onto the platform below, which will disappear, but don't worry – a new platform will appear to break your fall.

Walk off to the right so that you fall down. As soon as you touch the platform it will disappear, so do a quick diagonal jump to the left to reach the doors.

LABOUR THREE

At the start of the level jump up onto the long rope and climb to the top. Jump along the row of ropes to your right and stop on the one above the end of the bottom platform. Fall onto this platform, timing it so that you miss the creature that walks up and down.

As soon as you land, jump diagonally to the left onto the rope next to the doors. Now all you have to do is jump into the exit.

LABOUR FOUR

Jump to the platform on the left, where there is a moving creature, then onto the small rope. Now you have to time your next jump so that when you leap diagonally to the left, you land just to the left of the moving creature.

Quickly jump to the long rope and climb to the top, then jump along the ropes to the middle platform. Next, jump to the ropes on the right until you are above the bottom platform. Now just fall off and walk in through the doors.

LABOUR FIVE

A simple one this. Just walk right, off the platform, to drop next to the exit, then hit the doors.

LABOUR SIX

Jump over all the creatures so that you get to the end of the platform, then jump down to the platform to the lower right. Jump diagonally left onto the platform under the one you started on.

Walk left until you fall off the end onto the platform below, then jump onto the ropes and make your way towards the doors. When you reach the end of the platform jump for the middle section, then onto the platform on the right. Now all you have to do is jump for the doors.

LABOUR SEVEN

This is one of those deceptive screens with loads of invisible platforms, so extra care is needed. Jump onto the small rope above the platform by jumping diagonally to the right, then jump right again, off the rope. You will now be falling down towards the flames, but a platform will appear just before you hit them. Walk towards the right and jump diagonally off the end onto another platform which will appear.

Repeat this process until you are over on the far right of the screen. Jump up so that another platform appears, then do a diagonal left jump to land on another magically appearing platform. Walk off the left of the platform to land on another invisible floor, then jump for the doors.

LABOUR EIGHT

Jump onto the first platform from the left, then go right and jump onto the first platform on the right. Now jump to the platform to the left and keep going left until you get to the top.

Jump up onto the rope, then continue right, jumping from rope to rope until you reach the top-right platform. Now you can make your way to the doors.

LABOUR NINE

There are two quick ways of doing this, but it's incredibly tricky.

1. Walk to the right off the end of the platform JUST as the flying creature is going down past the platform you are standing on, then hit the doors.

2. Jump off the platform towards the right and once in the air pull the joystick left. You should fall to the left and land on the doors to finish the screen.

LABOUR TEN

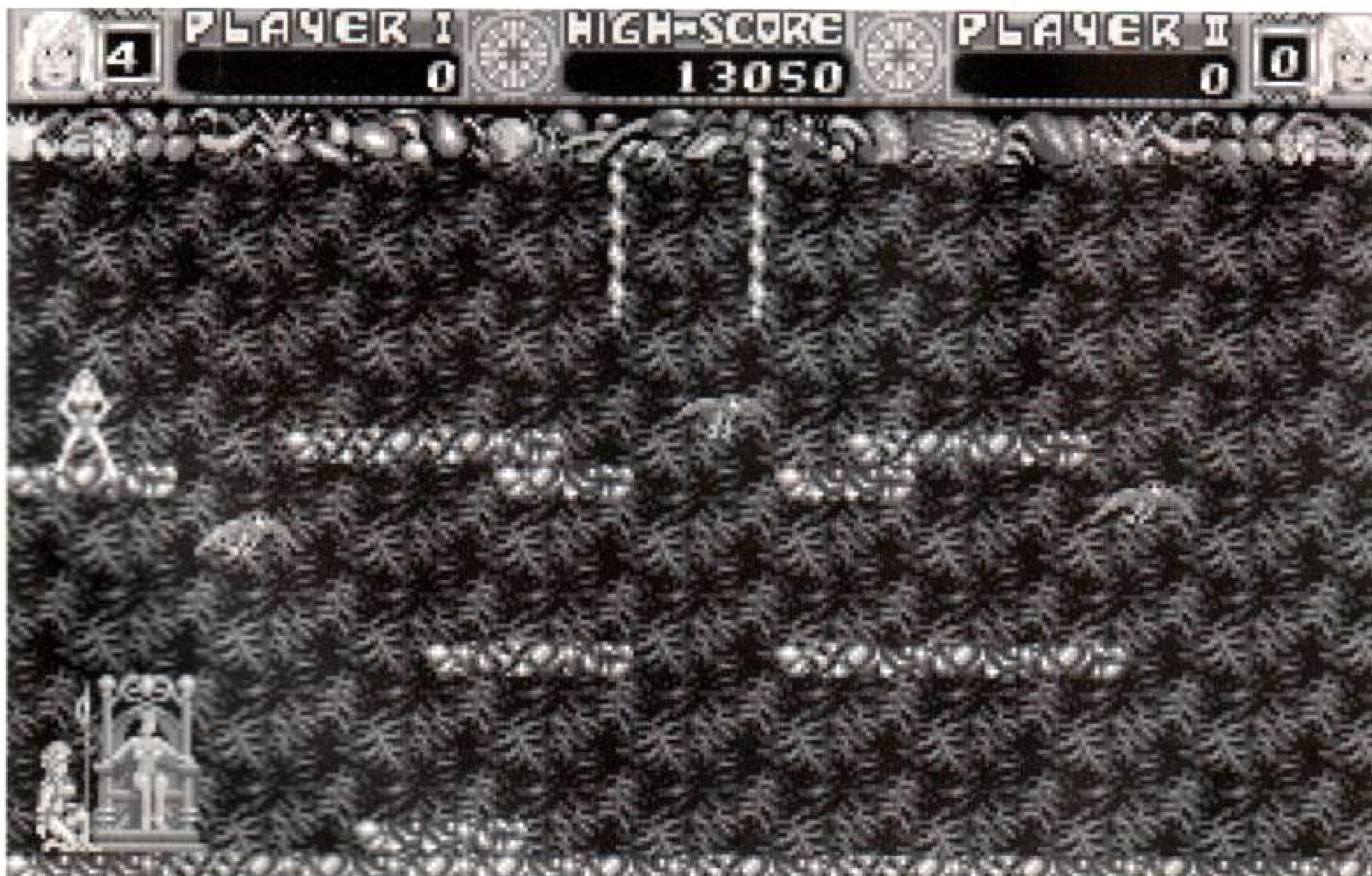
Jump up straight away to avoid the fireball that flies in from the right, then fall off the right-hand side of the platform to land on the one below. Jump across to the right, avoiding the fireballs, until you reach the last platform. Watch the timing of the fireballs, then jump straight up. A series of platforms will appear until you reach the top, then jump for the doors.

LABOUR ELEVEN

Jump onto the platform which is just to the right of where you are standing, then (this is the tricky bit) jump so that you land between the two creatures. Jump to the right over the creature, then quickly jump right again. If you are too slow, then the flying creature will kill you.

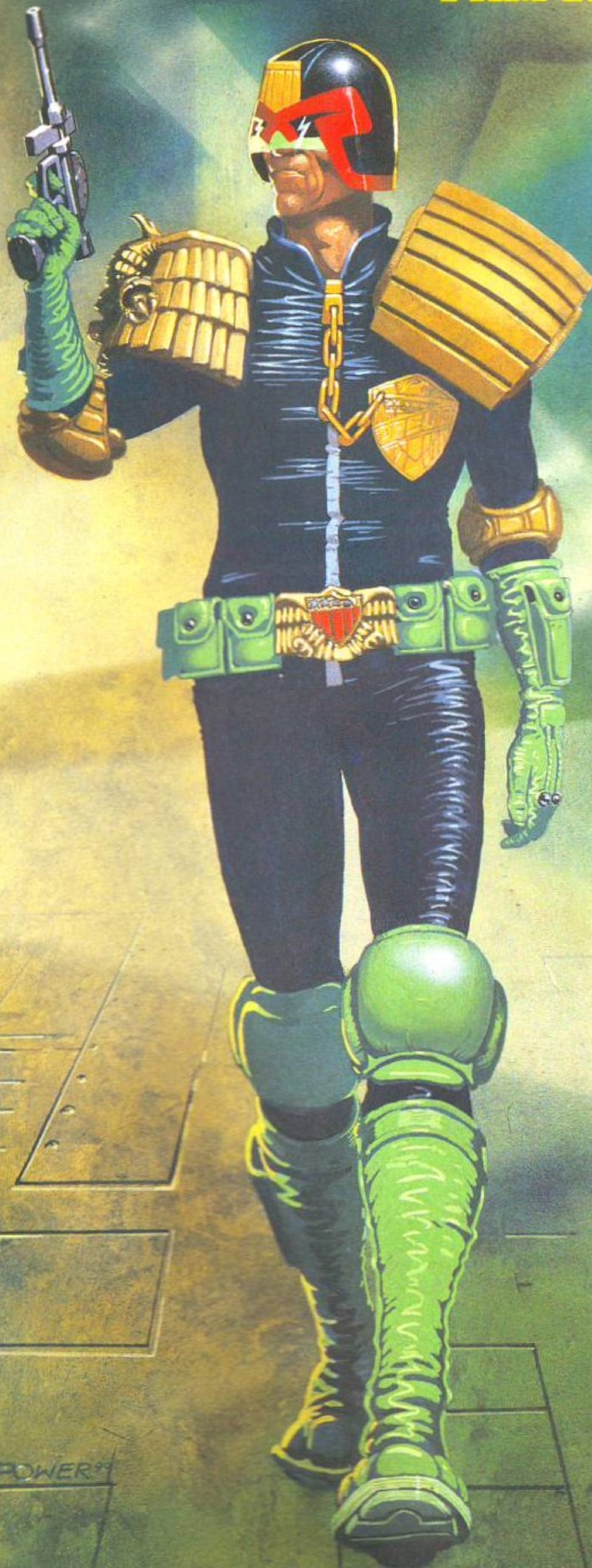
Jump over the two creatures on the platform, then jump for the long rope. Once on the rope, climb up so that you can jump onto the next platform, but wait until the creature is moving away from you before you do so. When ready, jump onto the platform, then straight away jump for the doors.

Simon Hadley, Nuneaton, Warwickshire



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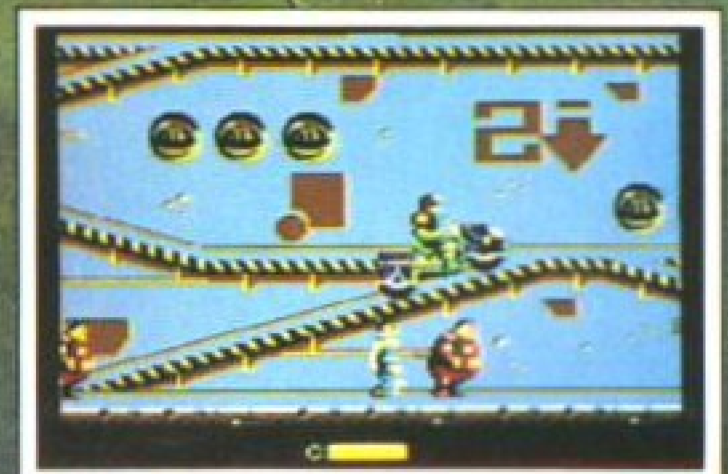
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VOODOO NIGHTMARE



Boots Barker has had a bad day. Stranded in the heart of darkest Congo, he is hounded on all sides by wild animals, natives, jungle gods and the malevolent Witch Doctor. Perhaps things will improve when night falls?

This huge isometric 3D arcade adventure contains some of the most cute and colourful graphics you will ever see. Instantly Playable with simple controls, the game will take you months to complete.

Explore the five underground temples, battle through a vast expanse of jungle, buy exotic items at the native shops, gamble your prizes away at the casino, embark on secret missions and that's not even mentioning the legendary Part II…

Voodoo Nightmare: It's a jungle out there!

"Voodoo Nightmare is huge, it will keep you occupied for ages. Well worth the money." "Superb . . . check it out!" **Amiga Action. AA awarded**

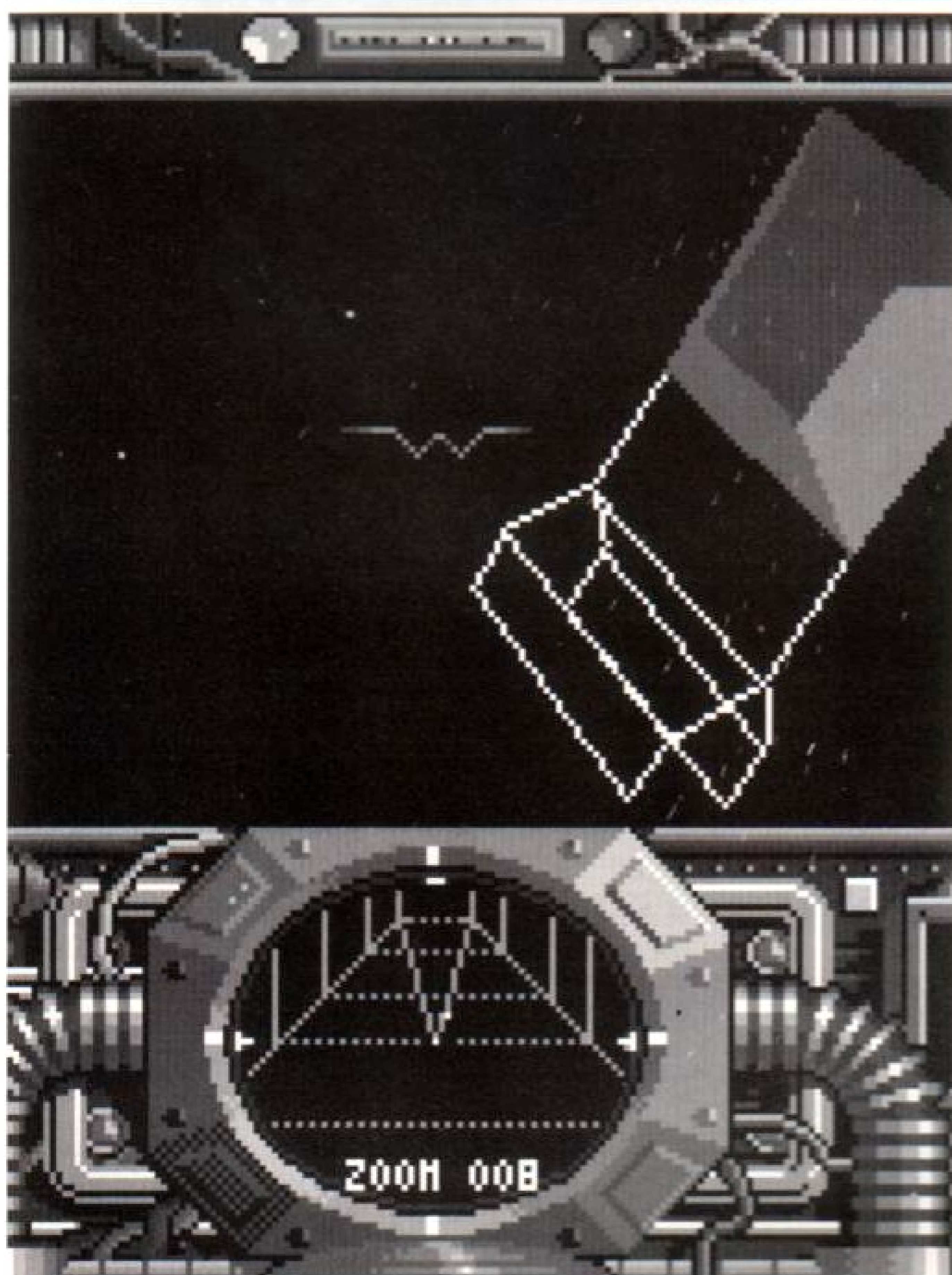
"Its enormous." "Really addictive . . . you'll find yourself playing it weekend after weekend until you've finished." **C & VG. C & VG Hit**

"Exquisite graphics . . . a plethora of thoughtful touches." "Voodoo Nightmare is a cracker!" **The One**

"Spellbinding graphics will entrance all gamers for ages." **CU Amiga. Screenstar**

ATARI-ST PALACE AMIGA

FEDERATION OF FREE TRADERS



This game caused a lot of consternation when it was originally released, ooh, ages back, since a lot of people took a huge dislike to it because it was too hard. Well, it's about time I threw my golden penny's worth into the sewer with some interesting tips to make it a little less traumatic.

One thing that could cause big problems for would-be traders is buying up stock that you can't shift. Here is a list of things to steer clear of:

- **Simple Manuals**
- **Arcturan In-Flight Space Jackets**
- **Class 4 Missiles**
- **Watches** ***(you can't even shift them on the street corner, me old china)***
- **Starport Blasters**
- **Sirius Cybernetics GPP Robots**
- **Exotic Space Lingerie** ***(oo-er!)***
- **Sub-Etha Chronographs**

As always, the things that won't shift are balanced out by things that fly out like snot off a hot buttered shovel. These include:

- **Old Janx Spirit**
- **Fallian Marsh Gas Cannisters**
- **Sub-Etha Sens-o-matics** ***(a very useful tool for Galactic Hitch-Hikers)***
- **Sens-o-tape copies of Playbeing** ***(phwoar!)***
- **Arcturan Mega-Gin**
- **The Book** ***(and we all know which book, but don't panic!)***
- **Algolian Cigars** ***(very hard to come by)***
- **Qualactin Hypermint Extract** ***(yum)***
- **Algolian Claret** ***(very hard to come by)***
- **Bath Towels** ***(a really hoopy frood always knows where his towel is)***

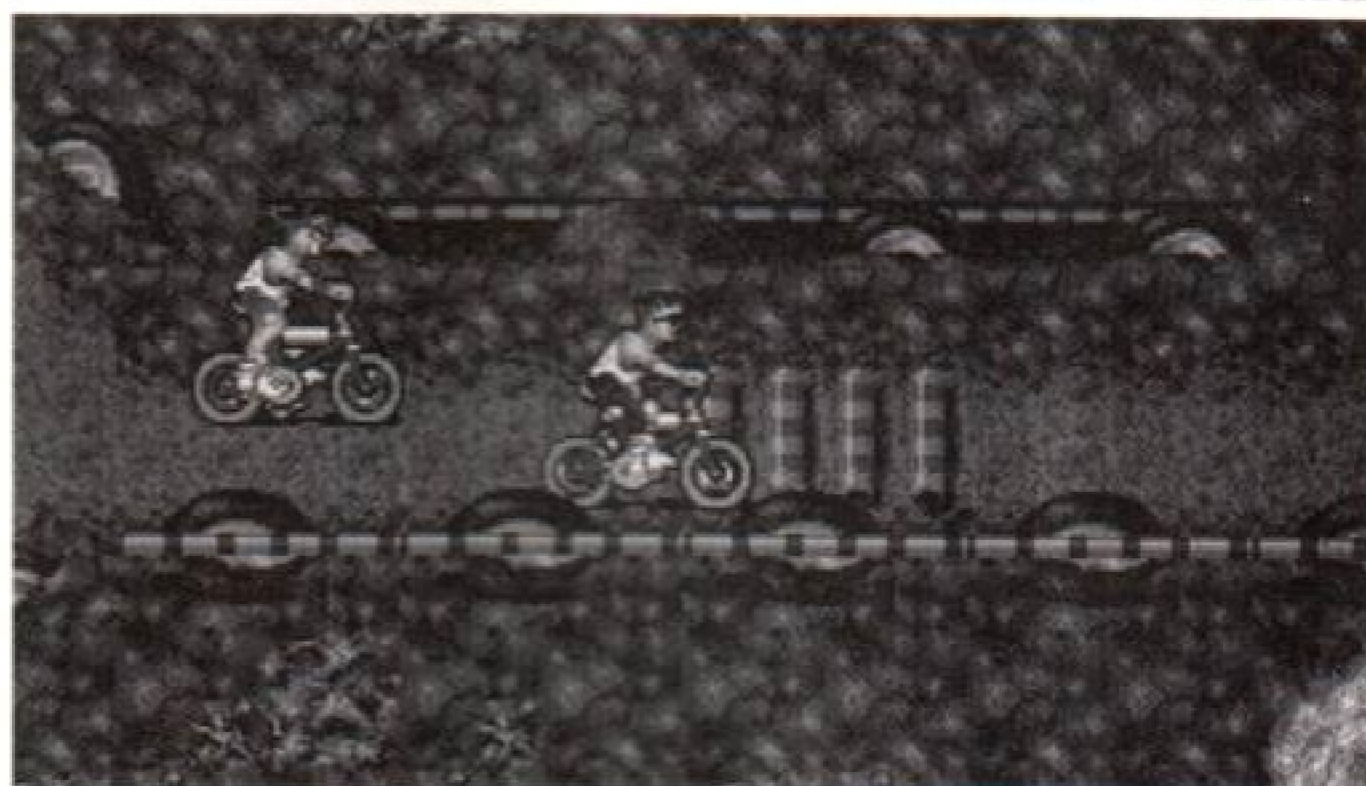
For some pretty nifty trading, whack into communications mode by pressing F1, then get a ship to pass the sights, press F8 and enter the net as usual. Now press T followed by Return.

Now instead of chatting to the alien as usual, just keep hitting return until he replies. When he does, he might have something to sell or otherwise will ask you if you have anything to trade. If he just ignores you and logs off, just get into the net again and repeat the process until he loosens up.

This provides you with an easy way to trade on the Black Market, as you don't have to work out anything to type in.

Alan Hunt,
Norwich, Norfolk

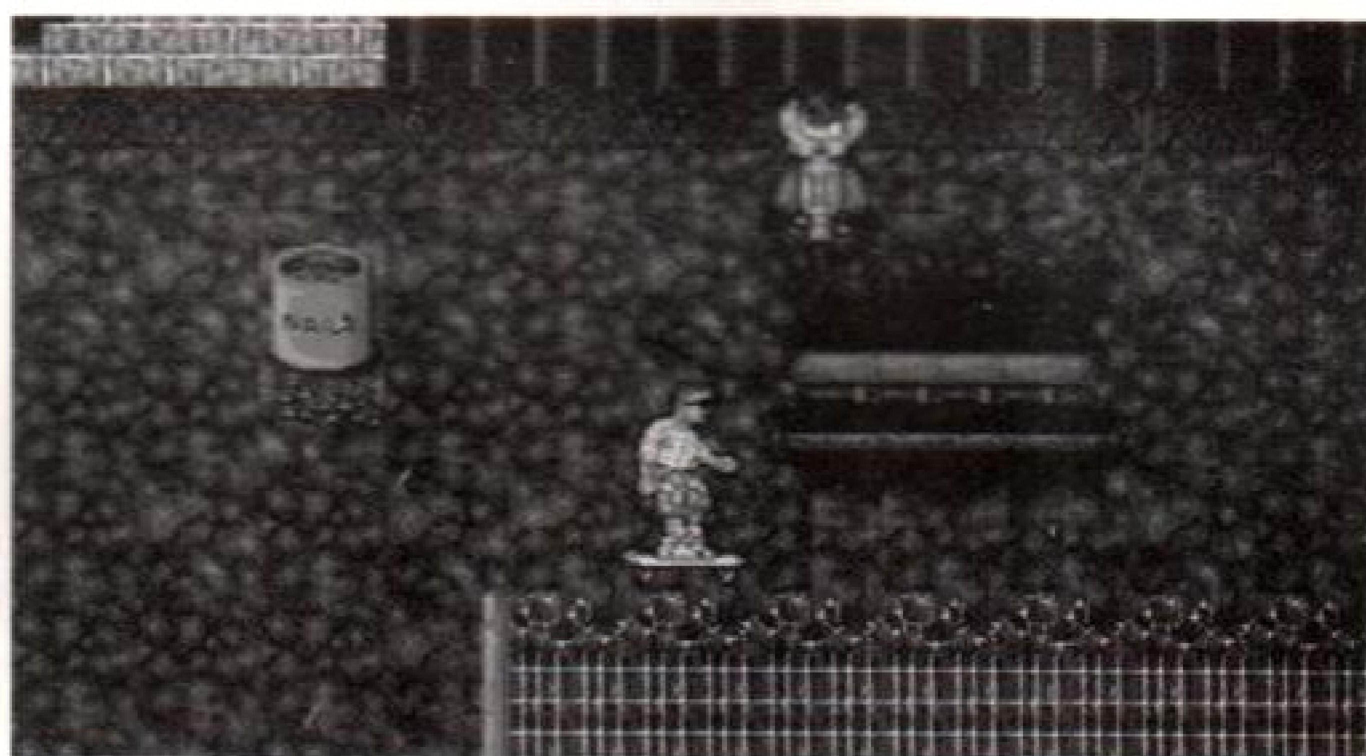
SKIDZ



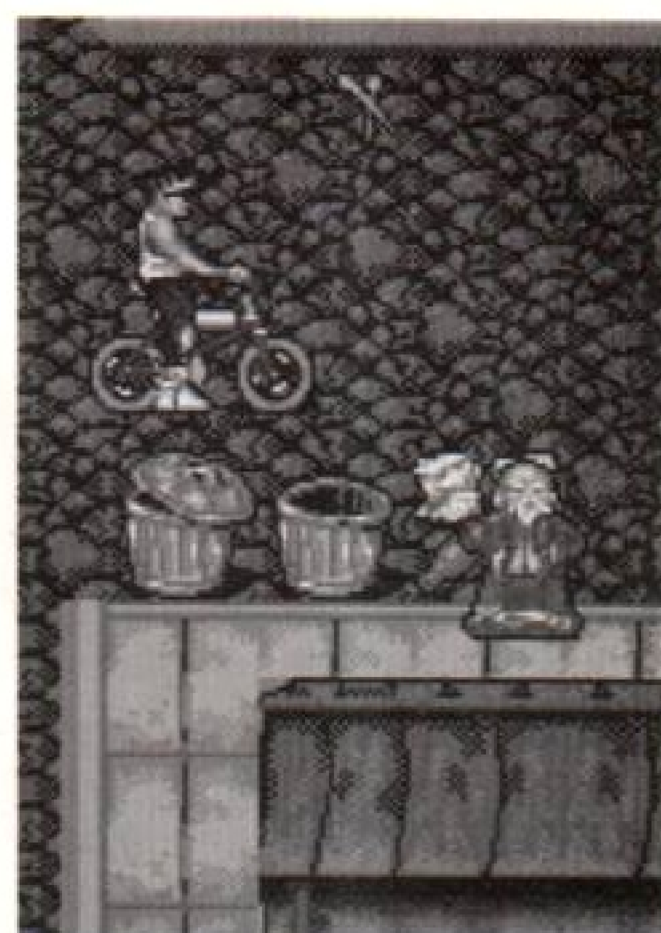
You know how it is. You're just about to dump off that last piece of litter, your skateboard hits a bump and you've had it. What? That doesn't happen to you? You're obviously not playing *Skidz*, then.

If you are playing *Skidz* and finding it difficult going, then just start the game, hold down fire and the Alt key. While doing that, press C to gain extra energy or M to skip a level. Dead easy, that! Where's me wheels…

Ben Cowdall,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire







WINNERS

This month's prizes should go out properly this month. There were a few problems recently, due to the fact I was deeply involved in a major car crash and so had other things on my mind... like my back! And nasty phone calls DON'T help! Still, the winners of this month's vouchers are S Czoka for the *Beast II* solution, Ben Cowdall for his big list of tips and *Monty Python* and Alan Hunt. No, not thanks to Ben for *Monty Python* and Alan Hunt, Alan Hunt wins the third voucher!

Now that's sorted out, I can ask you to send in your best tips. Er... send in your best tips, please! If you've got something decent, for goodness' sake get it in an envelope and post it to GAMEBUSTERS, *Amiga Format*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

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TESTBENCH 2



Hard Disk Drives

Still using your Amiga with just the one floppy disk drive? **PAT McDONALD** politely suggests that you should get more storage space and checks out the options.

If you've never played a game which uses more than one floppy, you may be blissfully ignorant of the tiresome process of disk swapping: that is, having to change disks mid-way through a game. Sierra Online are notorious for the amount of disks needed to play just one game, but they're not the only ones. Multi-disk packages simply contain more game, so they will become increasingly common.

There's more to extra storage than extra floppy drives to play bigger games. If you use your computer for serious purposes (like art and design, word processing, number-crunching or a million and one other things that are *not* playing games) then you need lots of storage available at once to get the most out of the system, rather than spending years swapping disks. In other words, a hard drive.

Hard drives seem like expensive luxuries to many people. They cost hundreds of pounds at a time and they represent some of the most fragile computer peripherals around. You have to treat them with a lot of care, or else they go wrong.

What are they exactly? A hard drive is a similar concept to a floppy, except that the disk part of it is sealed into the drive mechanism. The tolerances and manufacturing quality are amazing and, as a result, even a small hard drive can store 20 Megabytes of information, data or programs. A big one can manage up to 100, 200 or even 300 Meg of files. A floppy holds only 880K.

You can also plug in RAM chips to give your Amiga extra memory, so a hard drive doesn't just give you more storage: it can also give you more memory. Don't get muddled up, here: the RAM expansion is just like any other part of computer memory – if you switch the computer off, anything in the extra memory is lost. All data on the hard drive is remembered, though, because it's magnetically stored, right there on the disk.

For those who want the ultimate disk, optical drives are now becoming available. These are, at the present time, horrendously expensive (£3500 plus). They are similar to CD music players, except that they can record onto the Compact Discs as well. Usually, you can take the disk out and put another one in – just the same as a floppy drive. How much can you store at once? Up to 600 Meg per disk is the usual muddled figure.

A500 IMPACT II

Great Valley Products Inc
Imported by Power Computing
A500 only ■ £499 for 20 Meg
45 and 80 Meg also available

This unit is just entering production, so it should be available very soon. The original GVP Impact has been around for quite some time now, but this new unit is a big improvement.

The casing now makes it look like part of your computer rather than just being an unpleasant metal box glued on at the side. There's a switch on the front so that you can select boot from hard drive or boot from DF0: (the internal floppy drive). You can fit up to 8 Meg of RAM to it, which makes it expandable enough. The Impact II comes with a power supply, so it won't overload the computer's.

Impact II also supports SCSI, one of the industry standards for connecting hard drives and other expensive devices. You can 'daisy-chain' SCSI devices together – this drive features a custom-made SCSI interface from GVP, called the DPRC (Dual-Port RAM Controller). In addition to the internal drive up to seven more drives can be connected in a daisy-chain.

So far, this is all fairly standard stuff: but one new article included in this device is something called the GVP MiniSlot. Exactly what this does is anybody's guess. The Impact II series (see the hard card review elsewhere on these pages, 2000 owners!) are the only devices currently available to have it, so we'll just have to wait and see what GVP have got up their corporate sleeve – a transputer interface? A digitiser? We'll just have to wait and see.

To sum up, the Impact II is the latest in A500 hard drives. It has the exterior style to make it look like part of your system, together with enough expandability to suit most people. Prepping (preparing the disk for use) and formatting are not tricky with the supplied software on floppy (*Faast Prep*) and the manual just about copes – most people will find it too technical. Otherwise a good buy.



The GVP A500 Impact II is a real chip off the old block, styled to fit with the Amiga.

WHAT'S SCSI?

Small Computer System Interface. In theory, it's a way of connecting eight totally unrelated pieces of computer hardware together, so long as they all have SCSI interfaces.

Practically all Amiga hard drives use SCSI, rather than the PC ST506 format (sometimes called AT format). That's why they cost more – SCSI is much more flexible. You can connect more than just hard drives to your Amiga with a SCSI interface. And when you buy a hard drive, you always get a SCSI interface.

All very well in theory. The problem is that to use some of the wondrous SCSI technology (things like real-time frame grabbers, laser printers, scanners – all sorts of junk) then you must have some sort of driving software on your Amiga. This is a little bit thin on the ground at present, but I daresay people will be developing new toys to connect to SCSI in 50 years time. In the long term, then, SCSI is the way to go.

A2000 HARD DISK CARD – SERIES II

Great Valley Products Inc
Imported by Power Computing
A2000 only
■ £399 with Sony 40 Meg (on special offer for limited period only)
£499 with Quantum 40 Meg
100 and 200 Meg versions plus extra RAM also available

This is the sort of kit to aim for if you want a hard disk for your A2000 – or even several hard disks! It shares many of the features of the Impact II for the A500, with one important exception – the software to drive the whole kit is on ROM (stored on a chip) , which means that you don't need to use floppy software to customise the thing all the time.

It comes in two versions – one with the ability to mount up to 8 Meg of RAM, the other without. Each comes fitted with a 3.5-inch hard drive on the card – which makes it a bit on the large side. I'm not quite sure if it will fit inside the A3000. It almost certainly will, though.

The manual is of the same slightly daunting complexity as the A500 version. It's very helpful if you want to get stuck in to the system using the CLI, but first-time users will find it a bit of a slog.

Mind you, the software makes up for it to a large extent. *Faast Prep* is blessed with many automatic functions, leaving the manual-delving for those who wish to connect the latest in CD technology to be done at a later date. You can also use the manual to look up all the features. If you are lucky enough to have a PC Bridgeboard, then you can configure the system to boot up to PC emulation without too much hassle. Or a Mac system, for that matter.

All things considered, this board is excellent. It features the same SCSI ability as the A500 version, and can be adapted to fit your needs as you upgrade your system to the stratospheric limit possible on the Amiga. Well done, GVP.

5.25-INCH OPTICAL REWRITEABLE DRIVE

Great Valley Products Inc
Imported by Power Computing
■ £3299 for 600 Meg
(with one compact disc only)
■ Extra discs £239 ■ SCSI only
(GVP Hard Card 2 recommended)

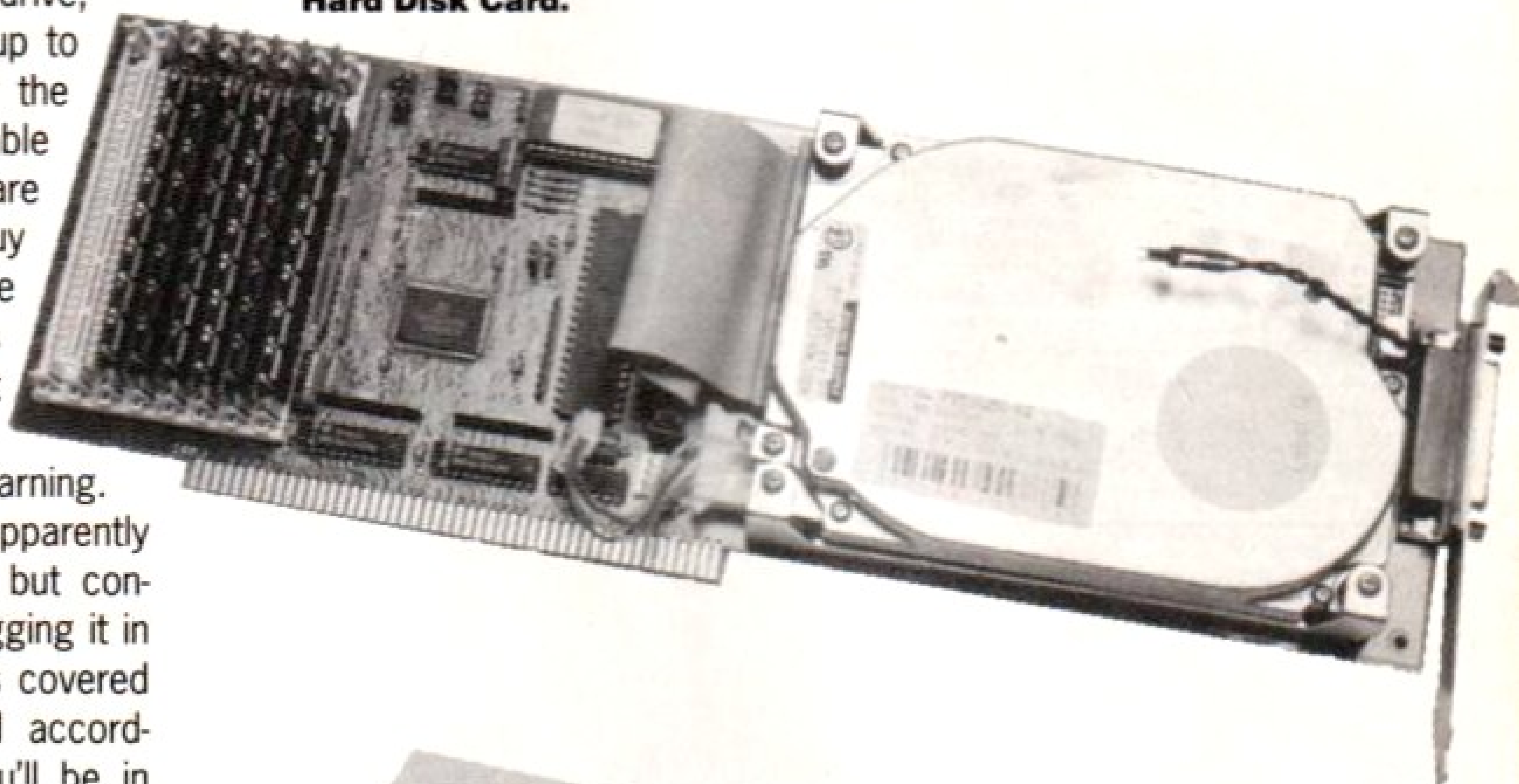
Assuming that you have some kind of SCSI interface and want to possess the ultimate in storage systems, this is the product to examine. It doesn't look at all impressive – just a big, heavy grey box with a couple of leads and a power socket – but that's because it's a SCSI drive and needs to be connected to your Amiga with a SCSI interface.

You'll also need some pretty impressive formatting software before you can do anything – the latest version of *Faast Prep* from GVP can easily cope, but so can most other SCSI driver software with some tweaking.

The idea is really simple. It behaves much like a floppy drive, except that you can store up to 600 Meg on just one of the discs. Each of the rewriteable CDs costs £239 and they are easily damaged, so don't buy one of these unless you're willing to see the system is treated with the respect it needs.

A few other words of warning. The thing is apparently supplied without a manual, but connecting it is a matter of plugging it in to your SCSI controller. It is covered by COCOM and is labelled accordingly, which means that you'll be in lots of trouble if you 'lend' it to the Russian Embassy or similar people. It's good news for people with big imaginations and applications, but I can't really see it becoming common as muck this side of the 21st century.





Lovely controller software, plus memory expansion, all provided by the GVP A2000 Hard Disk Card.

The GVP/Power Rewriteable Optical Drive looks very dull, but it is a very desirable board nonetheless.

ADSCSI 2000

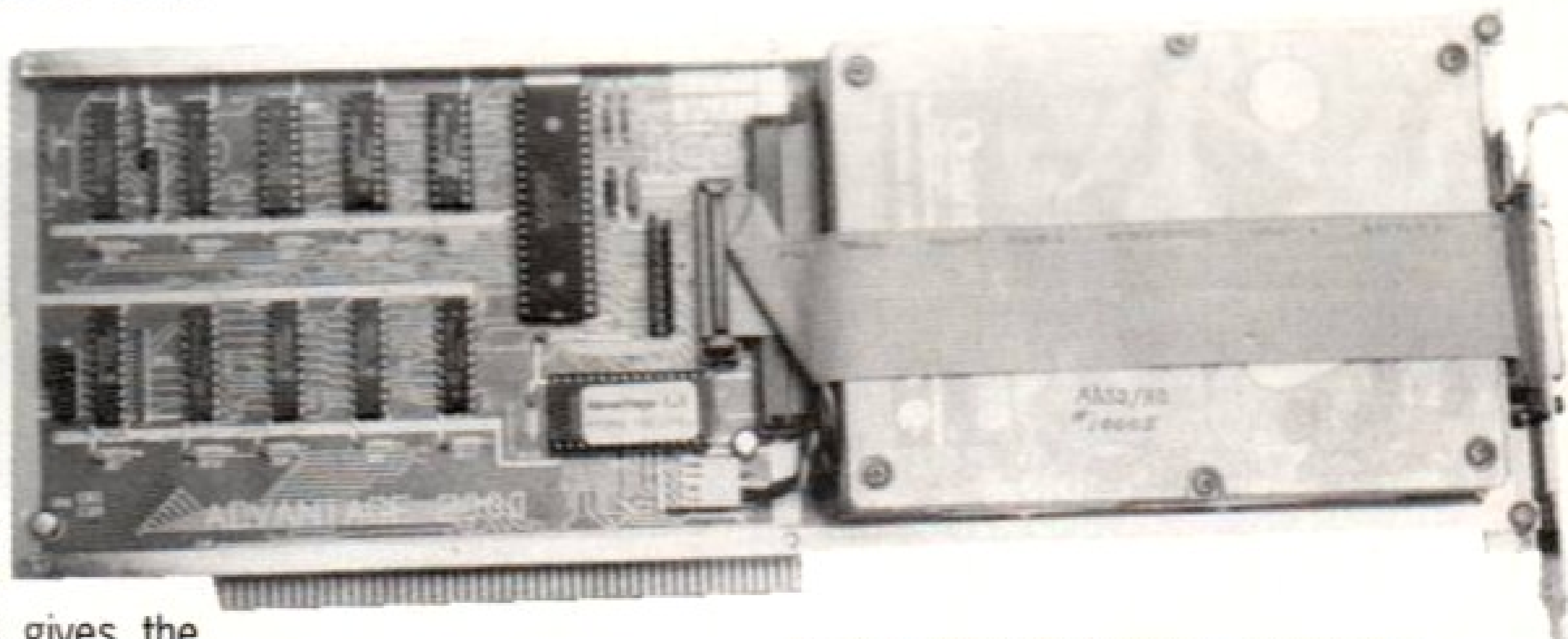
ICD Inc
Imported by Third Coast
A2000 only
■ £349.99 for 22 Meg
32, 50, 65, 85, 106 and 330 Meg also available

This is an alternative to the GVP Hard Card. It's similar in many ways and different only in terms of the software needed to get it working and the interfacing system. Advantage use *AdPrep* to make their product behave, again supplied on ROM.

The big difference is in the interface (surprise surprise, it's a SCSI unit). ICD have gone for raw performance and the ADSCSI can outrun any other SCSI unit around in terms of getting the data to and from the hard disk and the the computer.

If you have an accelerated Amiga with some 32-bit memory, then the transfer rate doubles again. All this raw speed gives the product a vital edge in terms of performance.

There's not really a lot to be said apart from that. The manual goes in for a more useable mix of technical data and help than do those of the GVP efforts, but the difference between the units is essentially very slight – except that you can't plug extra memory into an ADSCSI. If you want maximum speed and are not too bothered about the possibility of connecting several drives or devices, then this is the one to go for.



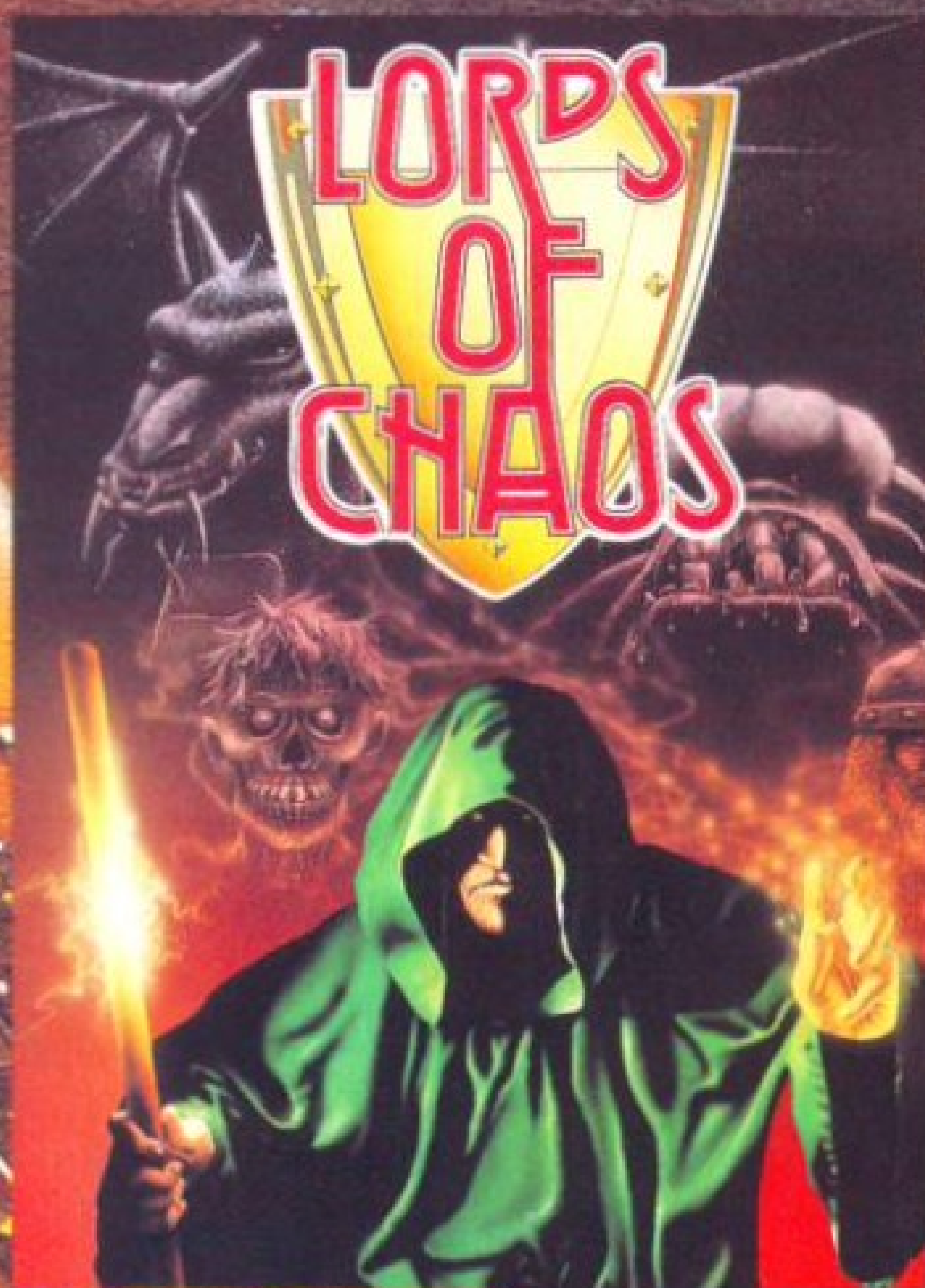
Is the ADSCSI 2000 from ICD the fastest SCSI controller available? Maybe, but you can't put extra memory on it.

ERRATA

I'd just like to apologise to TriLogic for getting their name and address wrong, along with the price of their 0.5 Meg RAM expansion board for the A500. They can be contacted at Unit 1, 253 New Works Road, Bradford, BD12 0QP – 0274 691115. The price of their expansion was recently dropped to £34.99 without a clock, £39.99 with a clock. And it comes in an anti-static bag to avoid damage to the onboard CMOS chips. End of grovelling.







Take a journey to a mystical land where Arch Mages battle for supremacy of magical new worlds - battle to become the LORDS OF CHAOS.

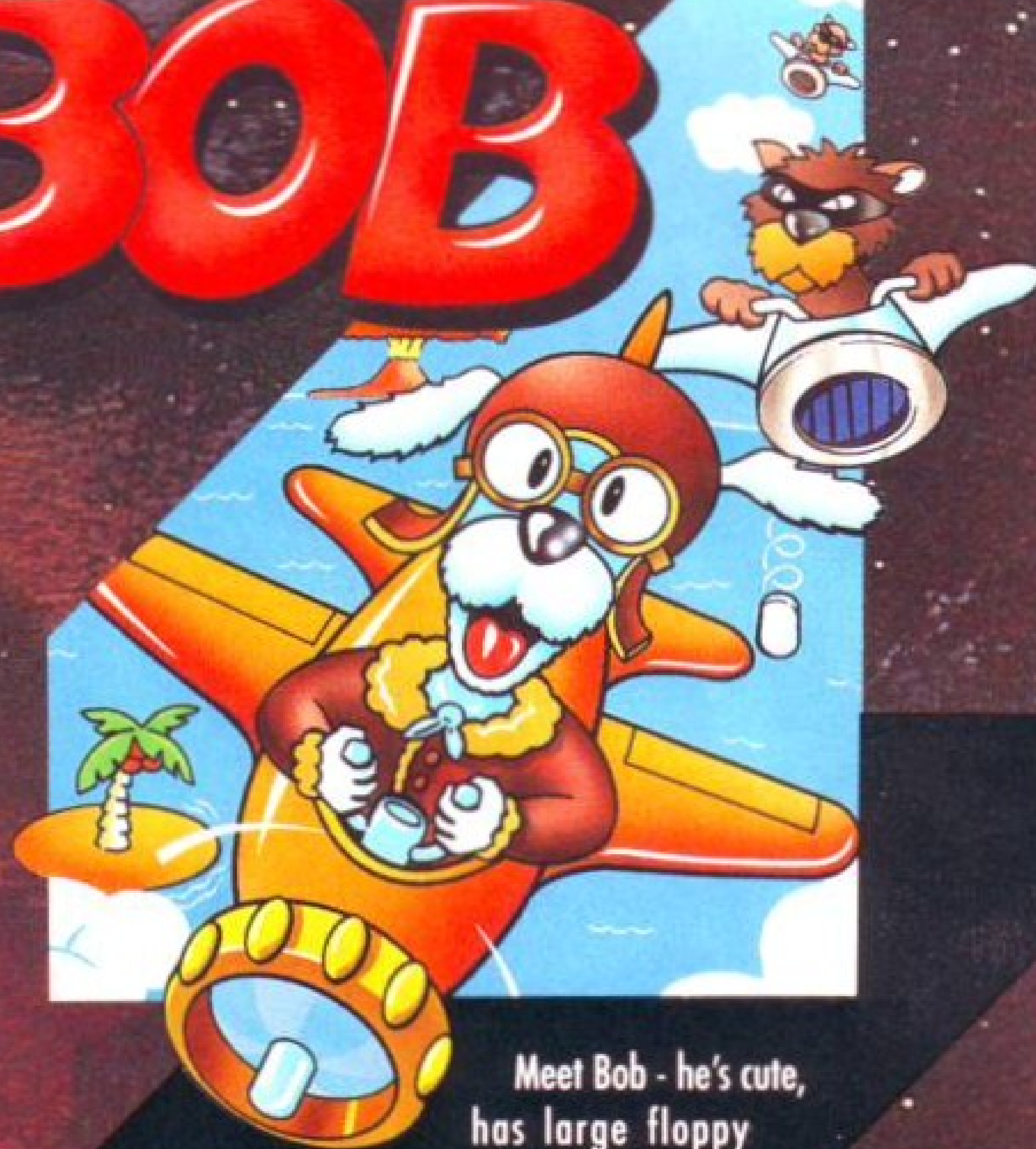
Produced by the designers of Laser Squad, Mythos Games have packed excitement and strategy into a game bursting with features: 1 - 4 players can battle against each other or highly intelligent computer opponents, make potions, cast up to 45 different spells, collect treasure and fight mystical creatures in this multi-level adventure.

YS "Megagame", Amstrad Action "RAVE", Commodore Format "CORKER".

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An outstanding playable shoot-em-up - Ziriax will have you battling your way through 4 gigantic levels of non-stop action. Parallax scrolling, hundreds of sprites, superb music and effects - joystick disintegrating action!

90% Joystick "Megastar", Amiga Kickstart "1" rated, 90% Amiga Joker - these are just some of the accolades Ziriax has received so far.

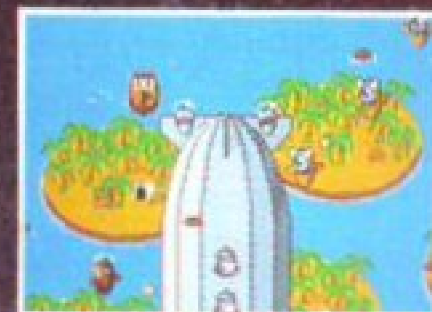
Available for Amiga only - £24.95.

details –

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"Bomber Bob plays brilliantly - I wouldn't be surprised if it appeared in coin-op form - its THAT good... graphically top class... instantly lovable... 3 cheers for original product!"
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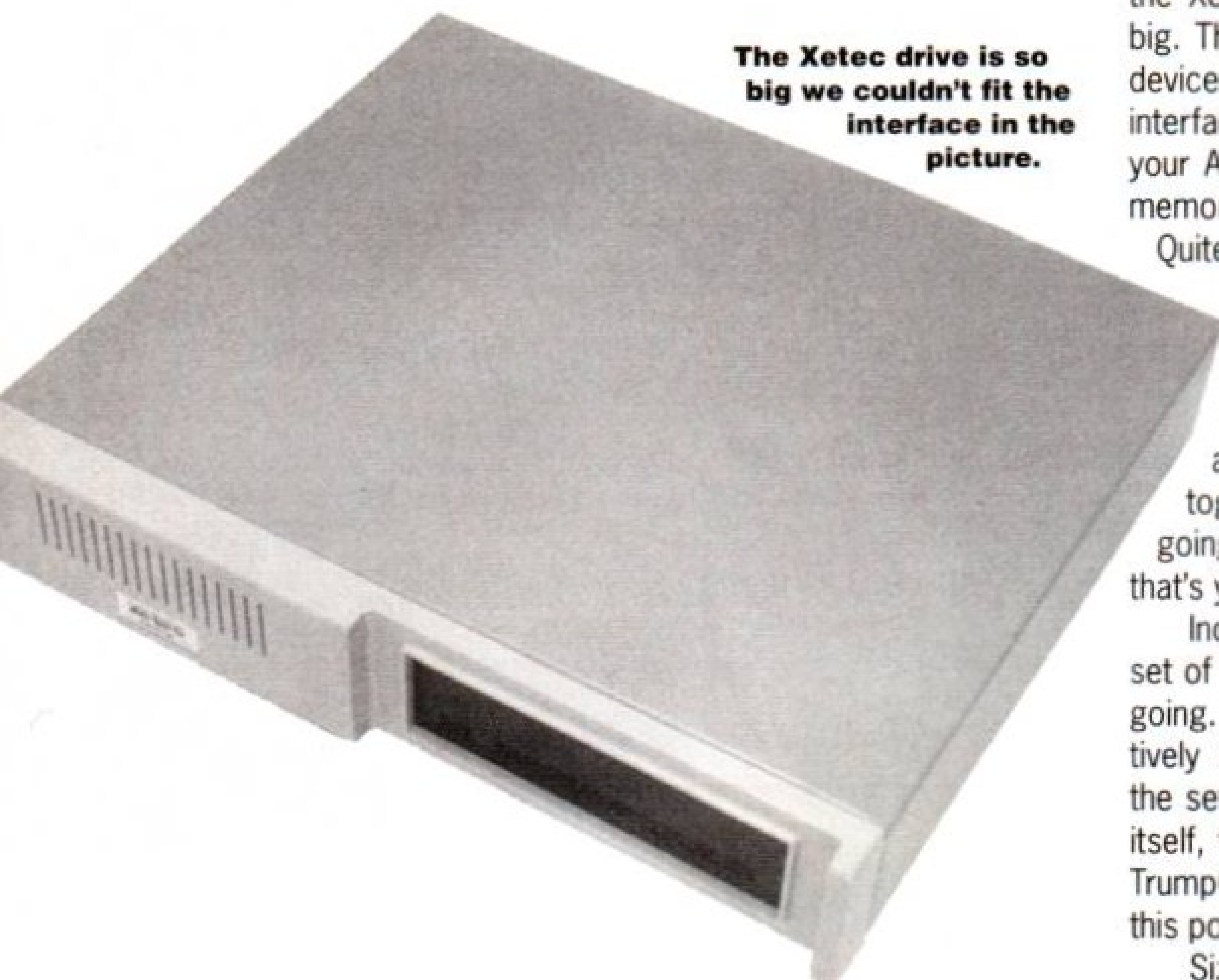








SPECIAL


The Xetec drive is so big we couldn't fit the interface in the picture.

XETEC FASTTRAK

Imported by Third Coast
A500 only ■ £599.99 for 50 Meg
65, 85, 106 and 330 Meg versions also available

The first thing that strikes you about the Xetec drive is that it's big. Very big. The drive itself is a (yawn!) SCSI device that plugs into the FastTrak interface that plugs into the side of your A500. You can also expand the memory capacity inside the interface. Quite a set-up, really.

The Xetec is fast. No doubt about it, if speed of access is your main buying point, then go for this. You can also daisy-chain hard drives together, although I reckon you're going to need an oversize desk if that's your plan.

Included with the package is a set of utilities and so forth to get you going. Indeed, getting started is relatively simple compared to some of the set-ups under review. The manual itself, though, is a bit skimpy, the IVS TrumpCard being much better from this point of view.

Sizewise, you can easily throw a bigger hard drive into the same box if you feel limited. You could then daisy-chain your old drive into the back of the box – but then you can do that with practically all SCSI systems.

What if you want to connect a drive that isn't SCSI, but the alternative ST506 (IBM PC) type? The Xetec offering can cope with this too. To round up, this is an excellent piece of kit – just so long as you can fit it in with your present system...



Doesn't look amazing, but the IVS TrumpCard is a stalwart hard drive nonetheless.

IVS TRUMPCARD 500

Interactive Video Systems
Imported by Third Coast
A500 only ■ £399.99 for 32 Meg
50 and 106 Meg also available

This is an old product, but still remains popular. Up to 4 Meg of extra RAM can be plugged in: a bit of a come-down from, say, the Xetec, but this is still better-endowed than the official Commodore A590 which has 2 Meg. The metal case has been styled a little to look like part of the computer, but it doesn't have nearly the same look and feel as the Amiga or the Commodore A590.

Diskwise, it's all pretty standard stuff. Inside there's a 3.5-inch SCSI hard drive, and you can daisy-chain other SCSI bits onto it. The software is a little down on connecting things that aren't hard drives, but this shouldn't be a problem.

The software is easy to use and is clearly illustrated in the manual. The two work together very well to give people unfamiliar with hard drive fundamentals a working knowledge of how it all works, without bogging them down in jargon. If only every manual were that informative...

For those who might one day wish to trade in their A500 for a 2000, the good news is that the TrumpCard can be configured to work with a 2000. It can even be made to work with the A-Max Mac emulator – most people will have to upgrade to A-Max II for that privilege.

If you're a little sketchy on how hard drives work, then this package will provide the best solution. It doesn't rely on existing knowledge and can take you up gradually. Admittedly it's a little ugly and it is not the fastest drive around, but it gives you the storage that you want, so who is complaining?

A QUICK NOTE ABOUT EXTRA FLOPPIES

If you're just looking for an extra floppy drive, Cumana's CAX354 is extremely good. It's slim, elegant, quiet and efficient. At between £65-£85, it's worth shopping around for one (or more: the Amiga can have up to three external drives, joined up in an – altogether now – daisy-chain!

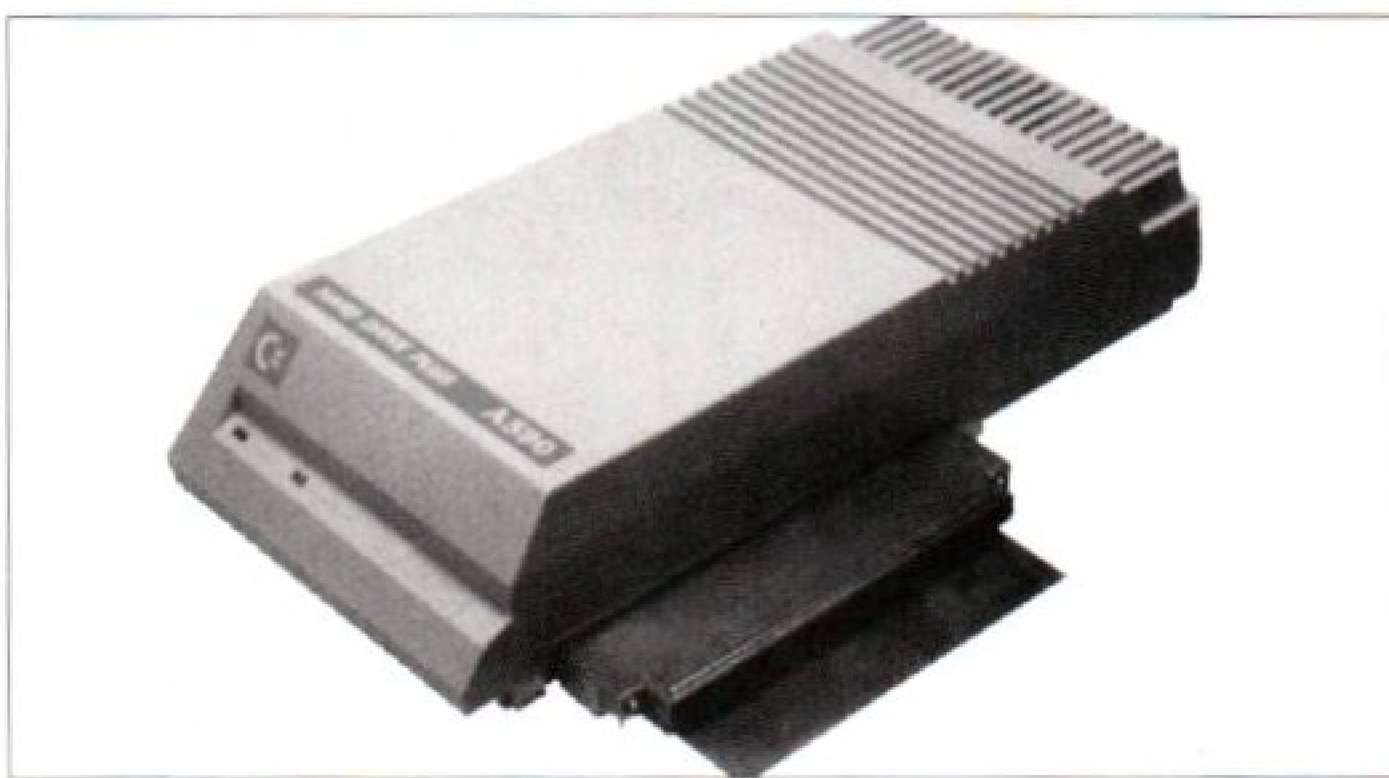
Personally, when it comes to a supplier I am happy to recommend Ladbroke Computing International, because they do seem to be fast at sending orders out and because their price of £64.99 (plus £3.50 unless you order over £100 worth of goods) is quite competitive. ■

OFFICIAL OFFERING

Commodore's official 20 Meg A590 was originally reviewed in *Amiga Format* Issue 2. It is a very solid unit, the design integrates well with the look of an A500 and it is highly recommended. But it was rather expensive.

It is now to have a price cut to £299. Up to 2 Meg of extra RAM can be bundled into the boxof the A590 and the capacity of the drive can be increased by getting Third Coast to put a bigger 3.5 inch hard drive in it.

☎ Commodore 0628 770088



The A500's official A590 hard drive is going to be cheaper soon.

SUPPLIERS

***Third Coast Technologies*, Unit 8, Bradley Hall Trading Estate, Standish, Wigan, Lancs WN6 0XQ ☎ 0257 472444**
***Power Computing*, 44a Stanley St, Bedford, MK41 7RW ☎ 0234 273000**
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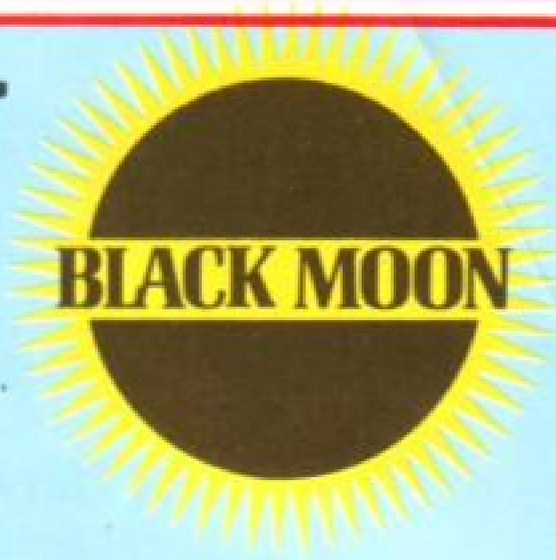
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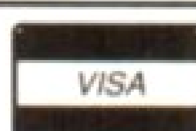
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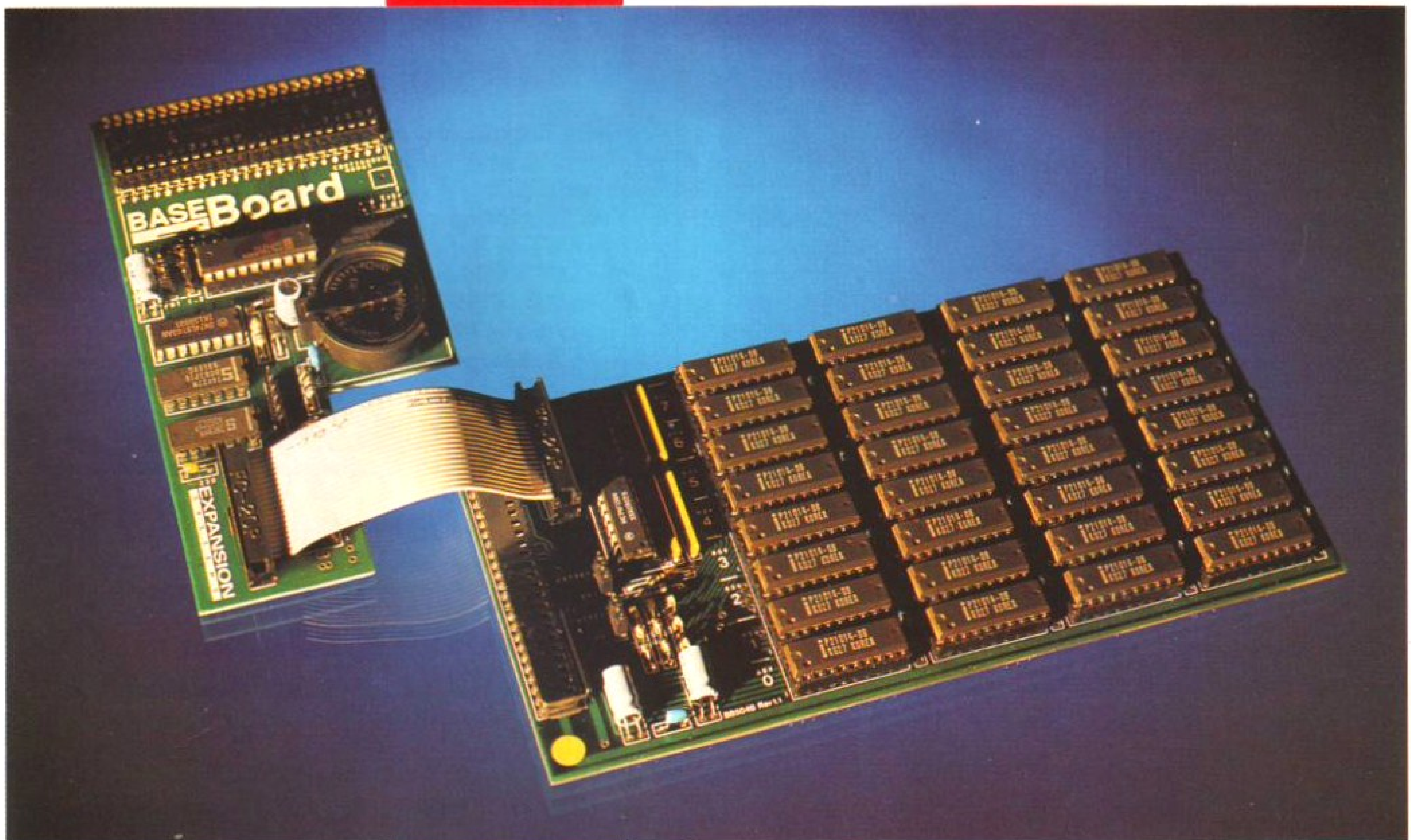
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QUESTIONS

1. What is amnesia?
a) Loss of memory
b) The food of the gods
a) Loss of memory

2. Which of these animals is supposed to have a good memory?
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b) Spiny echidna
c) Elephant

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RIGHT: The TechnoSound hardware, which plugs into the Amiga's printer port, comprising of a simple grey box with two phono inputs to connect to your sound source.

Musique Non-Stop Techno Pop

Still confused about where to start in simple sampling? **MAFF EVANS** investigates another entry-level sampler.

Last month saw the appearance of Sound Express, a new mid-priced, entry-level sampler to allow those with little knowledge of the technology to get to grips with the wonderful world of sound on the Amiga. As with many things, particularly buses, no sooner has one appeared than another comes along. This time, the goods arrive in the form of TechnoSound from independents New Dimensions.

The package comes in two forms – either as a complete software and hardware package or, if you fancy a cheaper option, without the sampling hardware. Both versions come with two disks (one containing the program and the other containing a set of demonstration samples) and a tutorial cassette, which leads you gently through the program's functions. Unfortunately the package doesn't contain any leads, so a quick trip down to the electrical shop is in order if you want to plug your sound source into the sampler – which would be a pretty good idea.

Close to the Edit

As with most sampling packages, the top half of the screen is taken up with the main waveform display, with an information strip above containing such information as the number of bits the sample uses, the filter status and the sample time. In the bottom half of the screen are the various function buttons and other windows, including the sample rate, sampling mode and input signal displays.

The general form of the program is very similar to Harlequin's Sound Express, with the editing modes, disk menus and effects modes displayed as individual strips. These are called up by clicking on the relevant button on the right-hand side of the screen.



BELOW: You can use the pointers to zoom in on a smaller area of the sample to carry out any editing, and the zoom function (LEFT) allows you to investigate the waveform that lies beneath the pointer.



Areas of the waveform are selected for editing by two pointers, which are controlled by holding down the left and right mouse buttons and dragging them across the display. This takes a little while to get used to if you've used other sampling systems, but for a relative newcomer this is a fairly logical system.

All the usual edit functions are included along with a few more specific commands. These include the normal cut, copy and paste, along with splice, insert, mix, delete, chop and flip to mirror the sample. All the functions are carried out on the area between the two pointers, including playing, recording and loading samples, which can be confusing at times – particularly when you can't work out why that sample you saved earlier doesn't seem to fit any more!

Can I Say Something?

After you've nicked all the bass sounds, drum noises and film cut-ups you could ever want, what else can the sampler do for you? Well, once you've got your sequencer playing your samples and dumped it to tape, you may want to sing over it – so what about some effects?

TechnoSound boasts some pretty nifty real-time effects which you can use to beef up a vocal, including various reverbs, an echo and a pretty impressive phaser, which matches for performance some of the pedal units available. Carrying some of these functions out on a backing track can produce some pretty psychedelic effects, I can tell you!

Ahead of the Crowd?

Last month's review of Sound Express threw up the expected trade-off between sound quality and the simplicity required of an entry-level sampler. TechnoSound manages to keep things nice and simple (and the tutorial tape makes the going even easier), but the sound quality is not bad at all. The samples are clear enough even at the mid-range sample rate and the real-time effects retain a clarity which enables the system to rival some established effects pedals.

Some aspects of the performance are a touch annoying, though, the most obvious problem being the surprisingly small edit buffer. Only 50K of data can be stored in cut and copy operations, which can be very frustrating when you're trying to shift long phrases around.

Still, the ease with which the operations can be used and the surprisingly clear sample quality make Technosound an ideal starting place for budding sample freaks.

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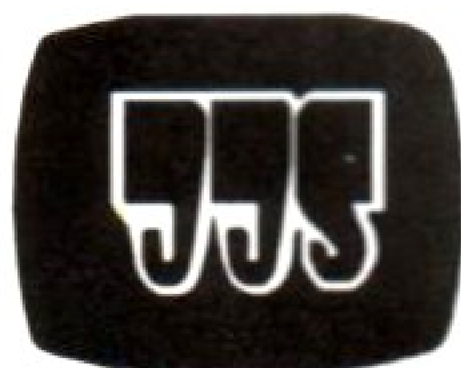
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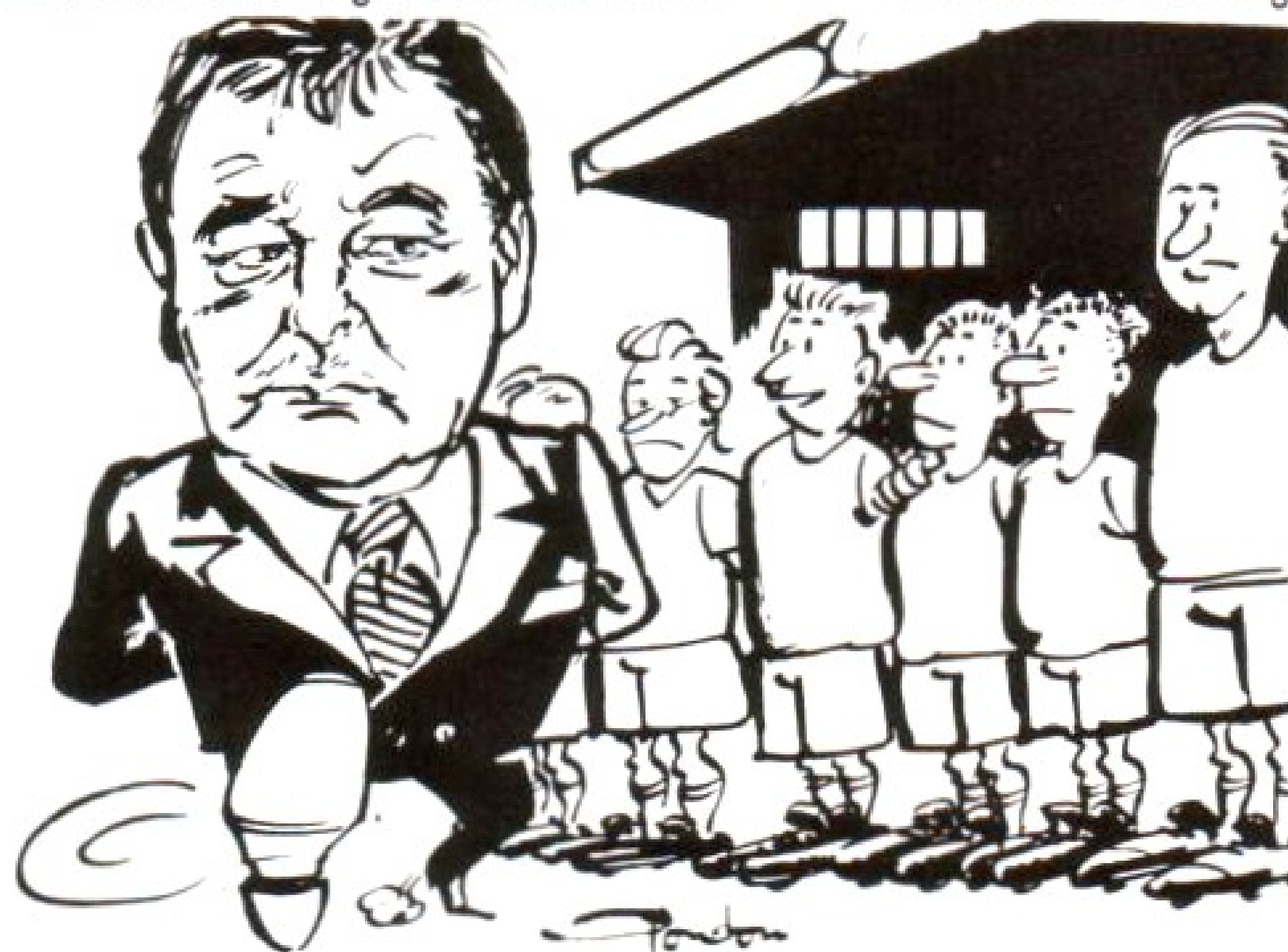
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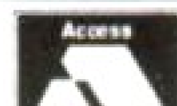
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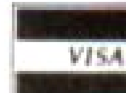
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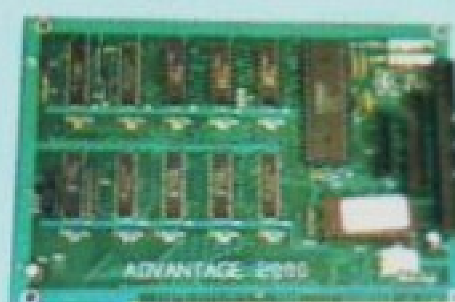
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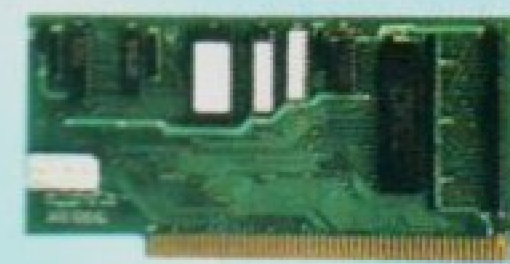
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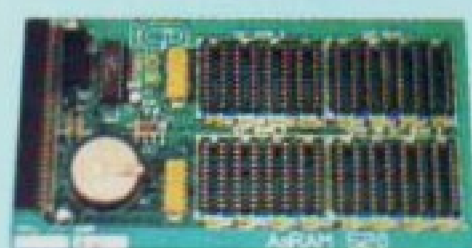
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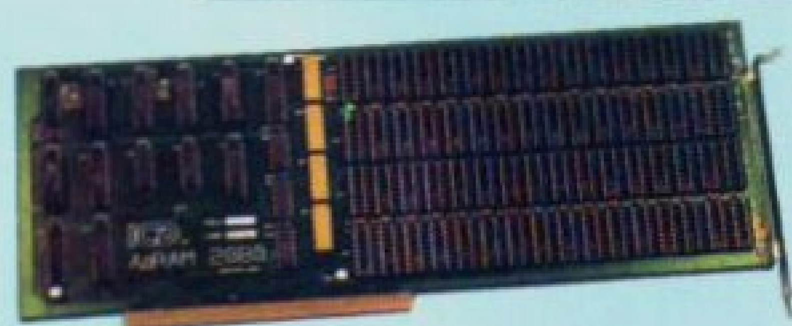


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Gold Standard

REVIEW

Yet another genlock for the Amiga? Certainly is – and as we're now in double figures, what can GST's GOLD offer over the comptetition? **ANDY STORER** wires his Amiga up to his video recorder to tape his impressions...

GST's GOLD genlock comprises of a nine inch square matte-black slab of electronics an inch and a half thick. In essence the device is simply a means of synchronising the horizontal and vertical scans of your Amiga with those output by a videorecorder so that superimposed images from both can be combined for display on a single monitor.

Since the genlock can be used as an output device too, this means that Amiga images can be recorded to video. For this purpose, the unit comes with a separate Scart to Scart lead to hook-up video in/out on a recorder and a plug-in adaptor which sits in your Amiga's RGB monitor socket. Your monitor lead plugs into the adaptor and a Scart lead feeds the signal from the genlock via the adaptor to your monitor. The unit itself also includes a PAL Out phono socket and Video-In phono socket for video decks without Scart interfaces, S-VHS input and outputs and also a phono audio input. So, you don't need any expensive leads or video players to get up and running – but as this little baby costs £500 perhaps that's not such a bad thing.

Black and Blue

Once hooked up, the unit sits quietly doing its job of mixing the two signals but surprise, surprise, on booting into Workbench you won't see any incoming video image at all! This is because the genlock can split signals too – allowing you to flip between micro and video monitor output.

Direct and Inverse control buttons on the front of the unit allow you to choose which signal, when mixed, will superimpose over the other. These two buttons allow you, therefore, to choose between what are known as foreground and background masking or 'keying' – where everything that is black or blue on the Amiga's screen will be replaced with the incoming video signal in 'Direct' mode and the opposite in 'Inverse' mode.

So although the unit appears to have merged two distinct signals in the keying process, in fact this is not the case – so you can't save the video image to disk, for instance, but you can direct the same output appearing on your monitor back to another video recorder. If, then, you have another deck, you're all ready to start getting a little televisual.

Believe it or not, this same genlock unit is identical to the first genlock ever appearing for the Atari ST! At the time the price was thought to be fair because the ST requires hardware modifications to synchronise the clock pulses generated by its CPU with incoming video feeds. With the Amiga, the sync is already built in so perhaps the same pricing level would seem to be unwarranted.



This is the hardware itself. The GST GOLD unit is a good, no-frills genlock based on an old design that once belonged with the Atari ST, so how does it fare alongside more up-to-date competition?

However the unit does its job admirably – rock steady superimpositions are generated and direct and inverse signal switching is instantaneous. The resulting signal mix is stable and ideal for laying down to videotape. Further control over signals is afforded by separate control knobs for luminance, contrast, colour and phase and individual Red, Green and Blue components can be cut into or out from the incoming signals.

The Complete picture

But of course, a genlock is only hardware and to make effective use of its potential you really need videographic software. A titling package like *Title Page*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, is ideal for annotating video mixes and a paint package like *Deluxe Video III* is excellent for animating Amiga sequences to tape.

But ideally another piece of hardware, in the form of a digitiser, would complete the picture. It's something of a surprise then that GST doesn't include a digitiser in the genlock unit in order to maximise its value for money. If the SuperPic genlock can combine a digitiser and frame store for an extra £75, for GST's GOLD to do the same for an identical price would be a better deal because the build quality is preferable.

Another useful feature on a genlock not included here is a slide fader for precise adjustment of the level of superimposition as found on G2's £595 Videocentre. This would allow you to create real-time mixes and fades through hardware alone – essential when you can't punch onscreen icon controls precisely because that's the screen you're videotaping! So there's a couple of inclusions left out which at this price-point could have stitched up the opposition. However, we're left with a good, reliable, no-frills device that does exactly what its intended to and looks pretty stylish too. Pity then it's not a hundred quid cheaper.

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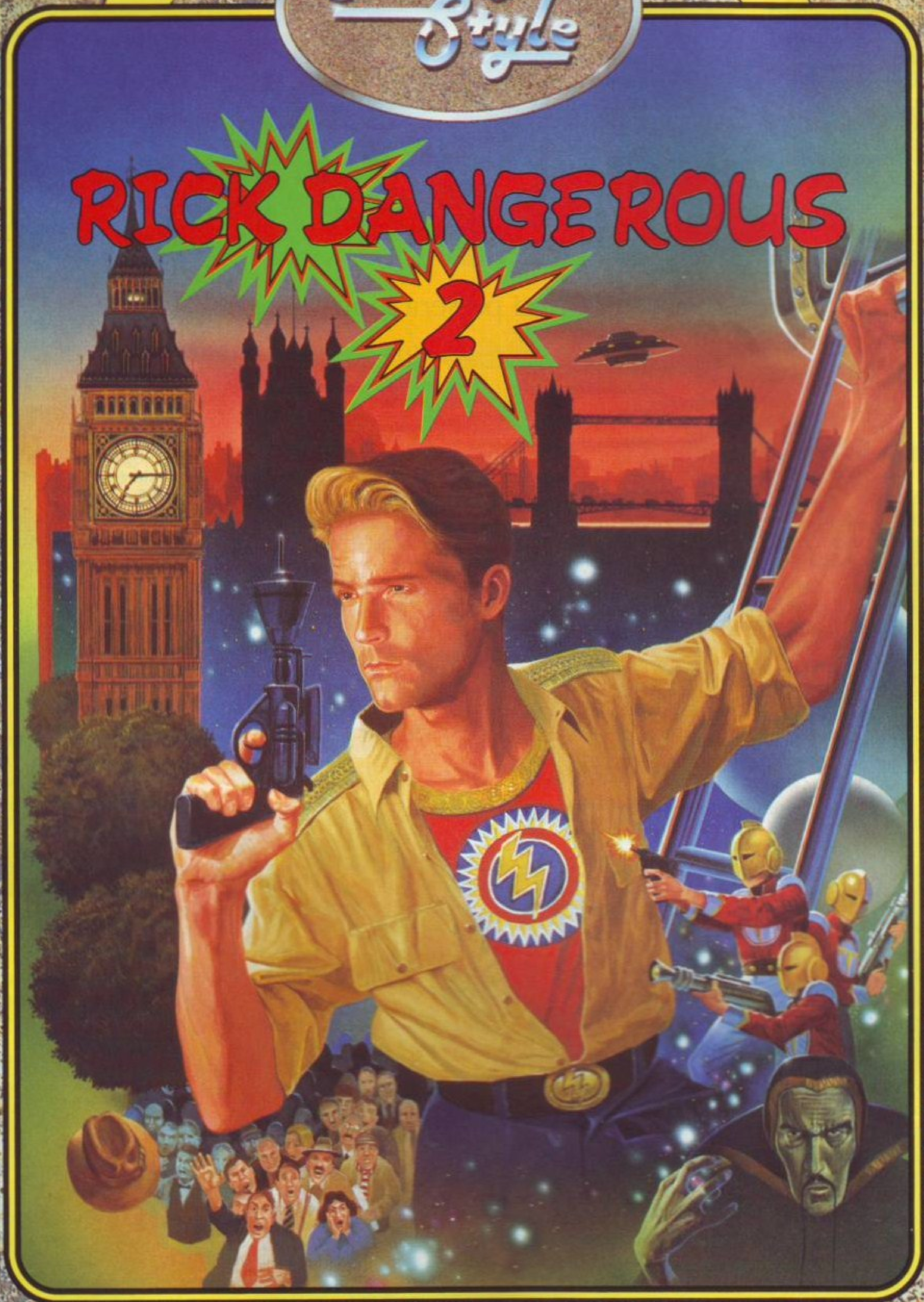
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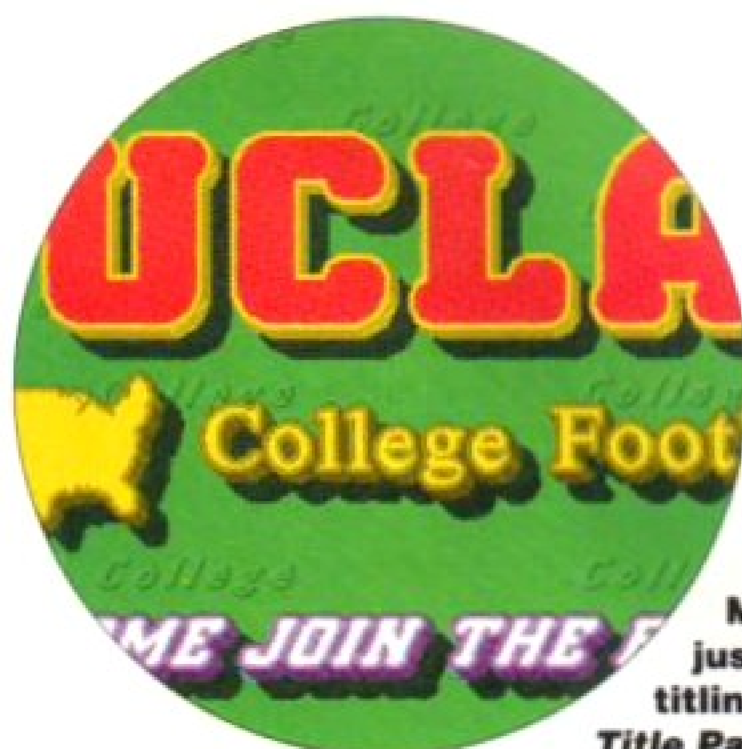
The Man in the Hat is Back..

IN A FLASH !



Total Titles

A whole wealth of video titling and presentation features are on offer in Eschalon's all-new video titling package, Title Page. **ANDY STORER** tests it to the full...

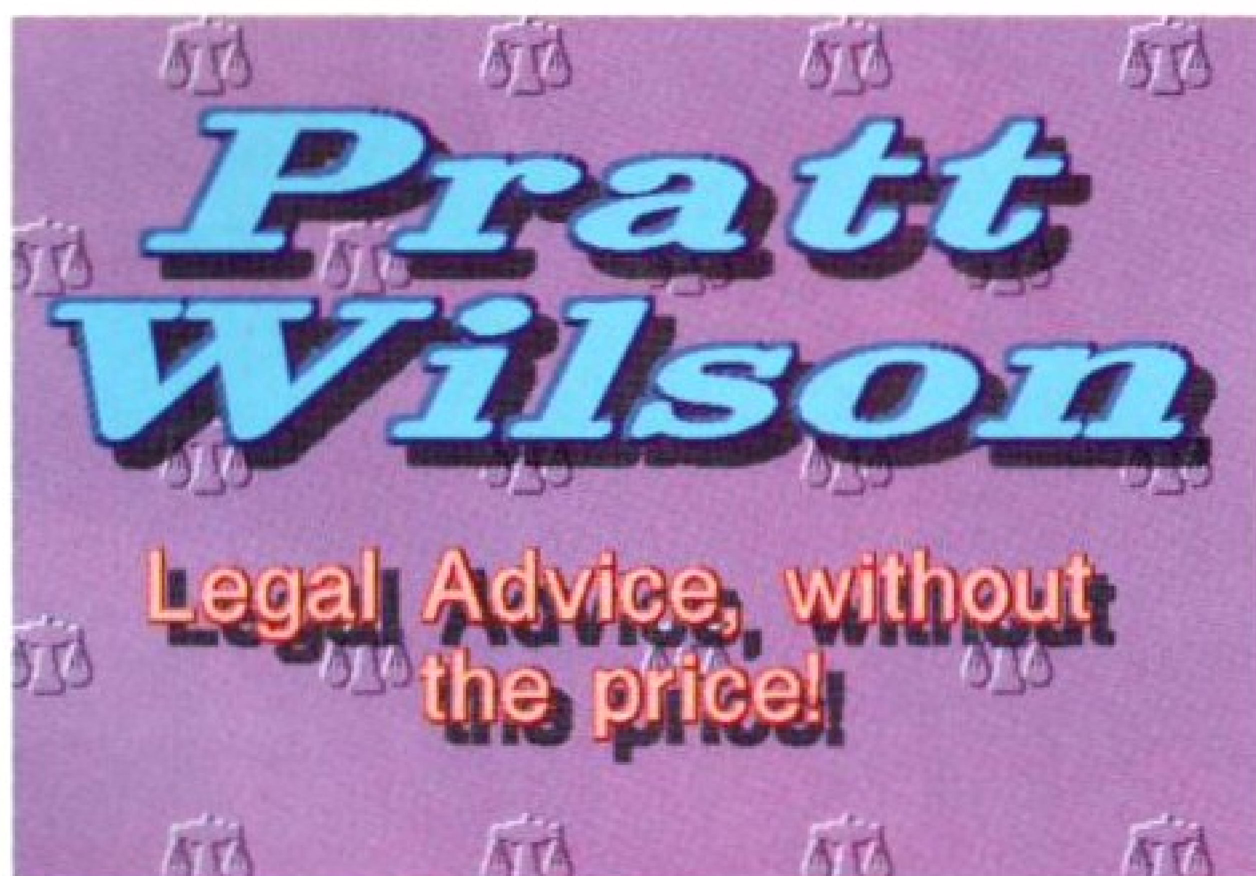


More than just a mere titling program, *Title Page* can also use backgrounds from other paint packages and manipulate them to produce a complete screen image.

In simple terms, *Title Page* allows you to generate and manipulate text before sequencing the results to form a slideshow. Although you could, for instance, simply annotate animations produced in *Deluxe Paint III*, the package really comes into its own when used in conjunction with a genlock. Over 40 graphic transitions (fades, mixes and wipes) can be scripted and text can be overlaid on live or recorded video to produce a range of titles limited only by the user's imagination.

But *Title Page* is good for far more than just fancy text. It's also a paint package, graphics editor and animator all rolled into one. Backgrounds imported from other paint packages are treated as brushes, so they can be modified with additional skewing, rescaling and stretching horizontally or vertically, before being filled or having effects such as shadow and depth added. You can also adjust the justification, outline and even the angle of light illuminating an object.

As the usual mouse-driven cut, copy and paste commands found in all art packages are present, screen brushes can be quickly and precisely positioned and duplicated. A full complement of graphics tools is included to facilitate the fast production of lines and shapes such as rectangles, ellipses, parallelograms and the like.





ABOVE: The range of fonts on offer is wide, which does much to increase the appeal of the titles. These static backgrounds demonstrate the shadowing effects which can be applied (the scales in the top image and the cars in the lower one), but titles overlaid on moving video look a lot more impressive.

Special Effects

Once the required background has been composed from the wealth of tools on hand, various effects can be brought to bear. Built-in effects include extrusion or depth, embossing and engraving – and you can customise your own using the effects editor and save them in libraries. Effects stored in RAM can be applied by hitting the function keys to which they were previously assigned, which allows instant trial-and-error testing.

If this weren't enough, all the above transformations can also be brought to bear on foreground text. Initially fonts, styles, colour and spacing are chosen from the Typeface and Size lists before being treated to bold, italic and underline stylings. These can then be picked up as brushes and treated to the same effects as the backgrounds. Also very handy is the small program *Viewtext* which allows you to display and print text files from within the program.

Transformers

Perhaps the best part of the package is the *TPMake* component which acts as a scripting area for the slideshow program *TPPlay*. The latter uses up to 45 different display transitions to show IFF pictures in sequence and determine which screen format should be in operation for each image. Variable transitions between IFF screens include spirals, merges, shades, drips, stretches, checkerboards, splits, sweeps and slides.

Edit Extras

At the heart of the package lies the EXT standard which underpins the Pattern Editor, Effects Editor and Dlist Editor. The Pattern Editor is a simple tool used to create and edit 16x16-pixel screen areas from a palette of up to 64 on-screen colours, while the Effects Editor offers treatment of effects elements. Both background and foreground brushes can thus be customised and the results saved out as IFF files.

The Dlist Editor allows you to create your own display lists so you can assign different colours to each of the Amiga's scanlines and further edit them with the kind of gradation, cycling and rainbow effects seen in all those innumerable demos. Yep, *Title Page* is even cool for producing the odd fancy demo.

Screen Scene

Title Page offers HiRes and Interlace either on or off with manual adjustment of width and height so that titling areas can be precisely positioned over an genlocked video background. Overscan and interlacing in LoRes screens can also be brought in when you wish to transfer your work to film and video. In addition, test-card patterns and Colour Bar screens are also included so you can centre your screen for video work and adjust your monitor for perfect square screen rendition.

Conclusion

The range of effects makes Title Page easily one of the best, if not the best, titling effects package on the market. Indeed, even if you have no use for a titling package per se, the stand-alone *TPMake* and *TPPlay* programs are worth the cost in themselves since all your favourite gallery art can be treated to a whole range of sequenced presentation with a great breadth of effects.

TITLE PAGE
All Amigas ■ extra RAM and storage advised ■ £139 + VAT ■ Eschalon Developments, via Precision 081 330 7166

First Words

With ever smarter graphics and presentation, the range of word processors is becoming quite bewilderingly large. MARK SMIDDY checks the choices and picks the best.

In these enlightened times just about everyone has at least some appreciation of what a word processor is – even if they don't know quite how to define one. For the uninitiated, here's a short resume. Take a letter Miss Jones. To Amiga Format Reader, *Amiga Format*, Bath.

"Dear Reader, a word processor is the modern equivalent of a typewriter. The typewriter was first patented by one Henry Mill in the 18th Century, but the first practical design did not appear until 1867, when two Americans (Glidden and Sholes) sold the design to Remington. The first commercial electric typewriter (the real precursor to the word processor) did not appear until 1937 when IBM started producing them in earnest. But it took another 13 years until the machines became widely available.

"A word processor has all the features of a typewriter. That is, it allows someone to construct a document in a typewritten form. In addition, it allows the easy correction of mistakes, the generation of a wide variety of layouts, and allows common templates to be stored for later retrieval and modification. They allow even inexperienced typists or writers to produce a professional, well-written document with the minimum of time and effort. Many modern word processors check spelling, offer alternative words (thesauruses), send personalised letters to hundreds of people (mail merge) and so on."

Leaving Miss Jones to her manual typewriter, the word processing revolution has given us a bewildering ranges of options – and given birth to a lot of dreadful buzz phrases. Before looking at the current rash of word processors, it's worth looking at some of the variations:



1) Basic word processor: Entry and correction of text, printing.
2) Advanced word processor: Advanced layout and basic WYSIWYG.
3) Document processor: With font options and better WYSIWYG.
4) Page layout system or Word Publisher: Simple desktop publishing.

These four options do not represent all the possible levels, but rather are meant to give a basic idea of what to expect from a system. For instance, someone who only writes a very occasional letter to a favourite relative or government department would be crazy to invest in anything more than a very basic, and therefore very cheap, system.

Aspiring authors intending to write a book or do a lot of writing would be better off with an advanced word processor – one that includes at least a spelling checker – but would be foolish to buy a document processor or page layout system. Why? Because the extra facilities slow things down and cost more money. Writers need to concern themselves with generating decent text, rather than deciding which font to use. That's what typesetters and layout artists are for.

Students, scientists and even businessmen preparing complex reports, however, would probably find the facilities of even an advanced word processor too limiting. They will need the extra facilities provided by a document processor to get presentation of the highest quality. This is also true of page layout systems, because there are times when the report can be written on a simple word processor and the final tweaks – presentation and graphics – can be added in the page layout system.

When choosing a word processor, it is vital to pick the one which best fits your needs. The range of choice is actually quite good, especially considering that a simple word processor is supplied with the Amiga in the form of *Notepad*.

> "A word processor is the modern equivalent of a typewriter. The typewriter was first patented by one Henry Mill in the 18th Century, but the first practical design did not appear until 1867, when two Americans sold the design to Remington"

MICROTEXT
Anco £19.95

The cheapest introduction to word processing comes from the masters of budget software. At the price, *MicroText* can only be regarded as a comparatively entry-level piece of software. On the minus side there is no support for fonts and no on-screen formatting. On the plus side, the package integrates with Anco's *MicroBase* to form a simple but workable mail-merge.

It would be unwise to expect a spelling checker or thesaurus at this price, since just licensing one could add 50% or more to the cost.

Overall, *MicroText* has all the advantages of being useable, cheap, and good enough for simple applications. Anco claim that it was designed with children in mind, which gives some idea of the level of complexity. It seems likely that children will find it easy to cope with whereas adults will no doubt find it too limiting.

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SCRIBBLE II
Microsystems Software £49.95

Scribble is one of the old faithfuls, so its continued survival amongst such stiff competition as has appeared in recent years must say something. Compared to recent competitors of similar price, Scribble II looks crude. The user interface is quirky, the spelling checker is poor, the printing is limited to basic Amiga printer drivers and even on an 16Mhz Amiga 3000, speed is not its greatest asset. Nevertheless, *Scribble* is almost as popular now as it was when it was first launched.

It is not usually wise to speculate on why one product succeeds where another – often a better one – fails. Even the name *Scribble* hardly suggests awe-inspiring power. This impression of overt simplicity is probably the key to *Scribble's* success. For all its rough edges, *Scribble* gets the job done and does so with the minimum of fuss.

For many jobs – writing letters, doing mail shots and almost everything Mr Average chooses to do on a word processor – *Scribble* can do it. The mail merge facility is simple but efficient and integrates well enough with *Organise*, which comes from the same software stable.

OFFICE WRITE
Gold Disk £129.95

Office Write, previously known as *Transcript*, hardly had time to gain a following before being dropped as a separate item and bundled. Gold Disk's reason for including it in a pack is not clear until the strength of the competition is considered.

On its own, *Transcript* could be regarded as just another budget word processor, but added to the muscle of the other offerings in this pack it's almost unbeatable in the home office stakes. £129.95 buys not just the word processor, but also DTP package *Pagesetter* 2, a complete flat-file database and the much-vaunted *Advantage* spreadsheet.

This effectively overrides the classic problem of defining where word processing stops and word publishing (or document processing) begins. *Office Write* (*Transcript*) is a simple and effective word processor suitable for many tasks. Where supreme quality, complex layouts, multiple fonts etc. are called for *Office Page* (*Pagesetter II*) is always at hand. The bonus to the user is speed when you need it most, for raw words. The 'word publishing' systems (*Pro Write, Pen Pal* and *Kind Words*) all trade speed for fancy graphics to some extent.

Taking account of the overall cost, the pack price may prove a little prohibitive, so it would be nice to have *Transcript* available as a stand-alone product. At its original selling price of under £40 it was an affordable and quite excellent product.

PROTEXT 4
Arnor £99.95

Protext has just been released in Version 5 (see below), but even so Arnor have chosen to continue to produce and support *Protext 4*. *Protext*, as the name implies, is written by professionals, for professionals. Proof positive that it can do the job – and do it well – is given by the fact that *Protext's* voluminous ring-bound manual was written entirely using the word processing package.

As for user-friendliness, *Protext 4* simply isn't! The benign and friendly user interface offered by the vast majority of Amiga programs has gone, supplanted by a stark four-colour window adorned by a headband of confusing data.

However, once new users get the hang of things like multiple rulers, macros, programmable mail merge, or even just the odd way of moving through the text they will be left in an unfussy environment to get on with what they do best – writing. Many professional computer authors would be loath to use anything else.

Protext scores unequivocally in two important areas: first, the size of a document is only limited by the available disk space. Few Amiga word processors can boast that. Second, and more important for anyone who does a lot of writing, it can spell-check the whole document in one go. *Protext* takes the document in large chunks, sorts all the words, finds the suspect spellings and displays them ready for editing. In practice, this speeds up spell-checking considerably over the normal method of finding a suspect spelling, correcting it and only then moving on to the next one. *Protext* offers both methods, plus check-while-typing mode.

Still confused about that headband? It's where *Protext* keeps all the important information about the document status: size, markers, insert mode, page number and so on. Incidentally, menus are supported by all Amiga versions of *Protext*, but for Version 4 at least, the keyboard short-cuts are usually faster!

PROTEXT 5
Arnor £149.95

The biggest improvement for *Protext 5* is the timely inclusion of a new dictionary. The original 70,000-word spelling checker was usable but nothing special. The new version is licenced from Collins/Proximity with legal and medical supplements from Merriam-Webster and contains in excess of 120,000 words.

This also accounts for the huge jump in price, but it was worth it. The phonetic look-up is arguably the fastest and most accurate around. Better still, it can spot capitalisation errors ('england' instead of 'England'), hyphenation, ellipses usage and even some contractions, like 'they're'.

Also new for this version are: some rather snappy commands for generating content and index listings; multiple-file editing, with split screen

TOP: *Scribble* is cheap, cheerful and popular.

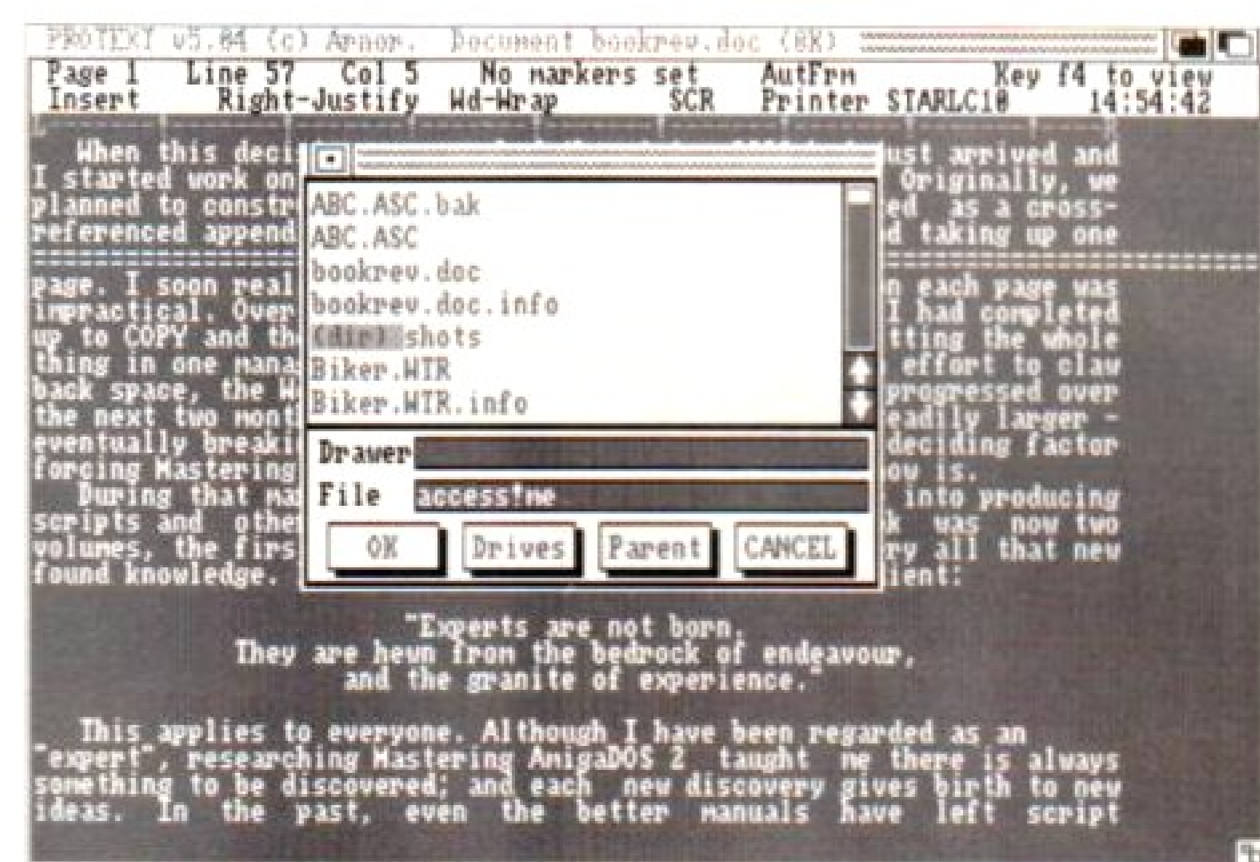
UPPER MIDDLE: *Office Write* comes as part of a great package.

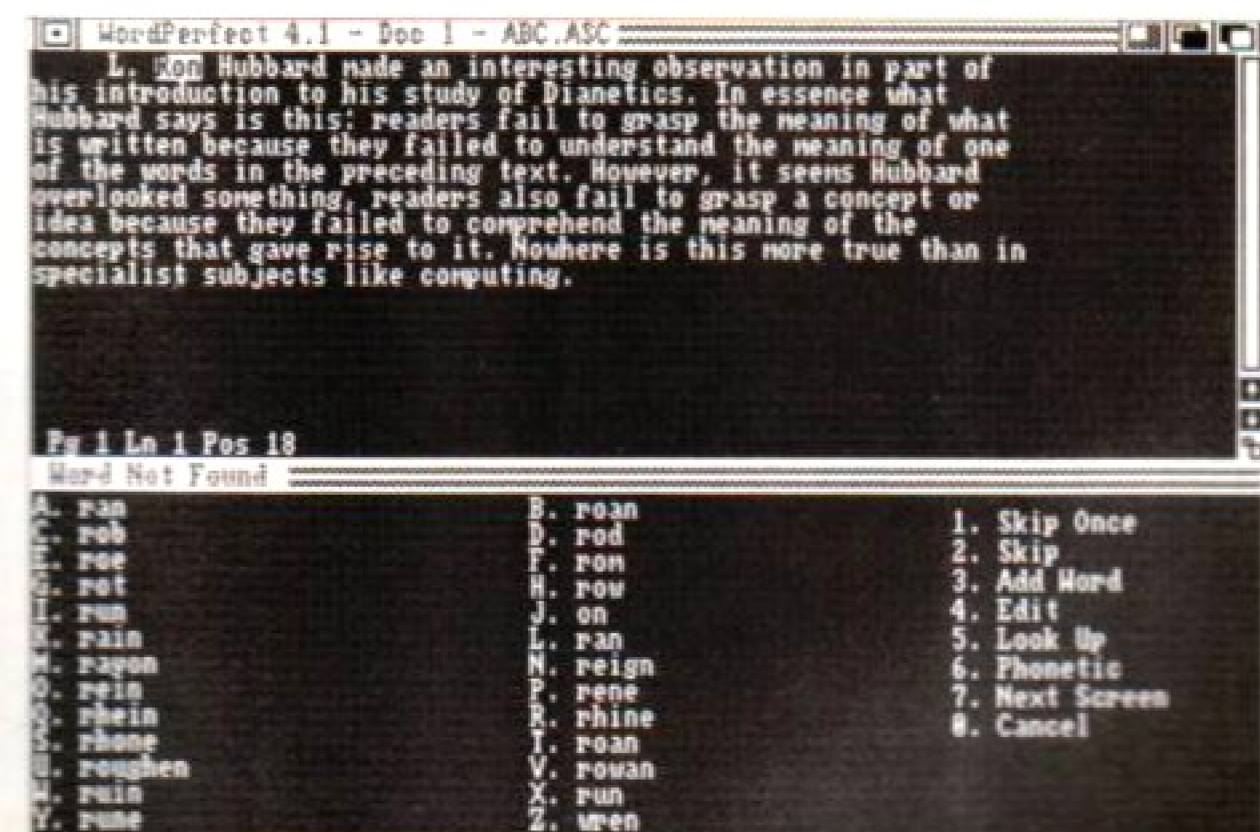
LOWER MIDDLE: The all-new *Protext 5* is swift and professional.

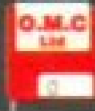
BOTTOM: *WordPerfect*, also of great quality.









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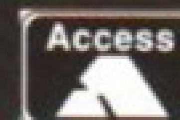
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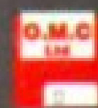
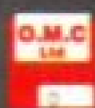
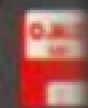


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feature; ARP file selector (at last); and a timed save facility. Last, but not least, the printer drivers get (yet another) update. The new 'intelligent' versions of the drivers allow everyone to get the best from their printer by selecting the correct font and style from an accessible menu.

WORDPERFECT 4

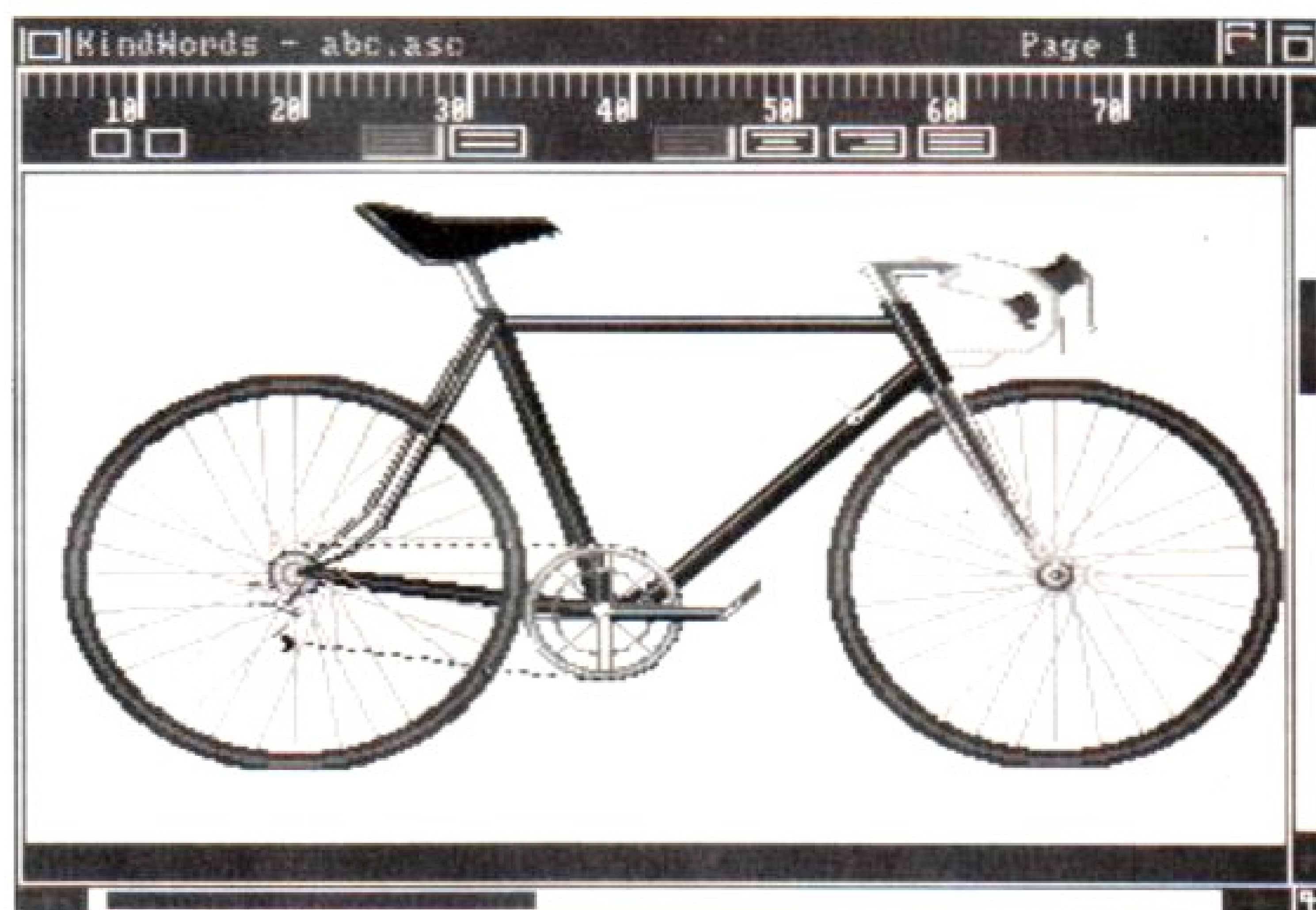
WordPerfect Corp £N/A

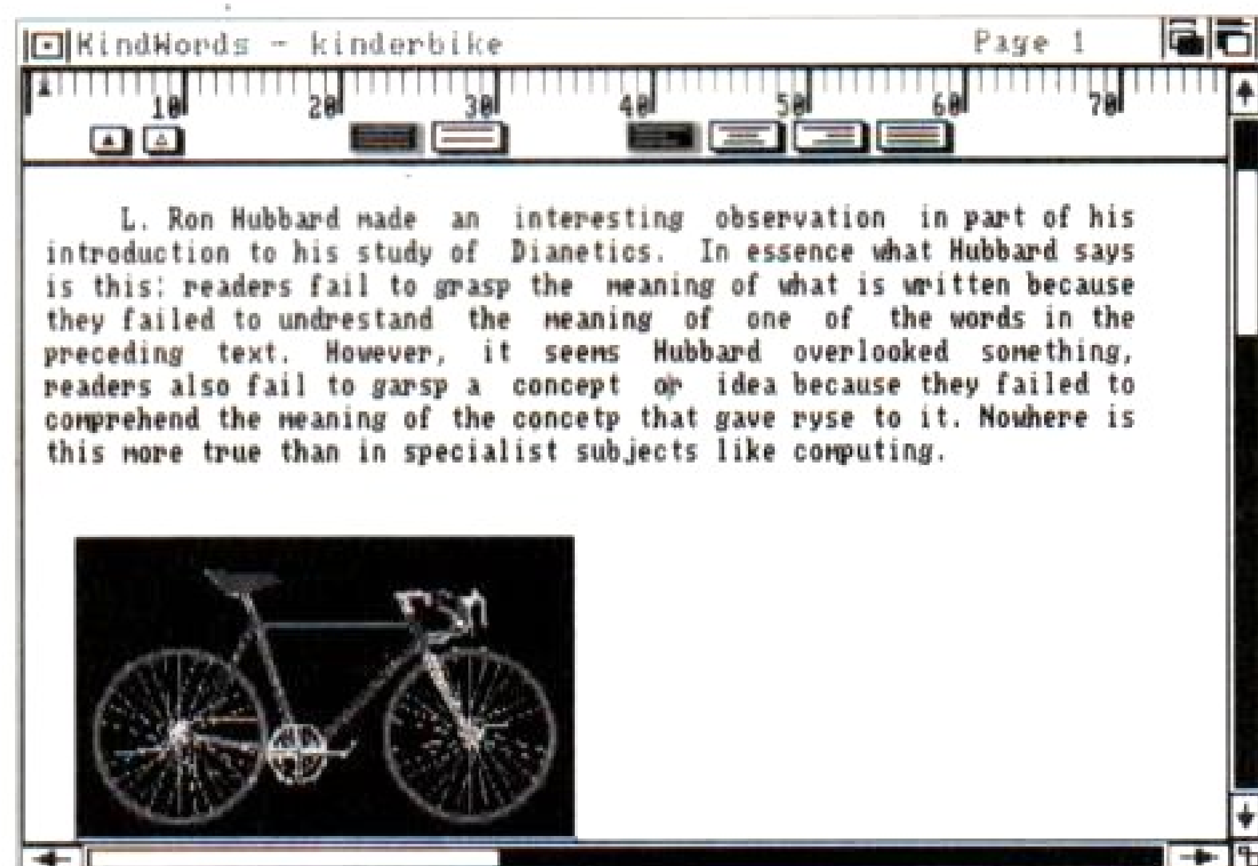
Being American in origin, *WordPerfect* has not been well received in the UK. Like *Protext*, it takes much of its features and functionality from its PC origins. Amiga folk have come to expect all-singing, all-dancing applications that look great. Rather like *Protext*, *WordPerfect* looks a little staid. Unlike *Protext*, however, it does not enjoy the backing of the 'popular' computer press – and in this respect it has suffered.

By way of putting the record straight, like *Protext*, *WordPerfect* is designed with professionals in mind. It is fast, powerful and hideously complex. Like *Protext*, *WordPerfect* can seem about as friendly as a rabid, cornered rat. Experienced users and anyone willing to plough through the masses of documentation, on the other hand, will find it extremely powerful and remarkably intuitive.

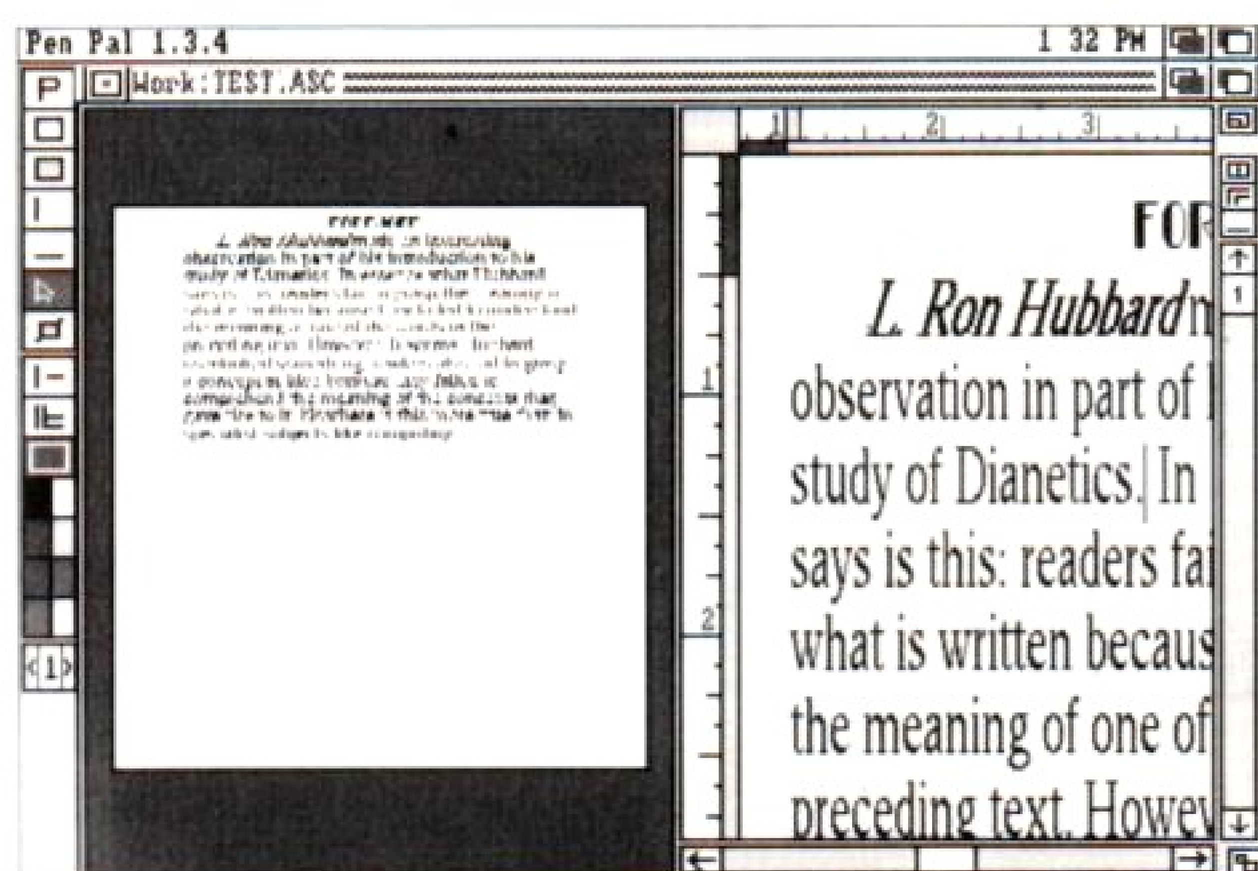
For immediate needs – write, spell, print – *WordPerfect* is far from ideal since the system takes time to get used to. Before attempting to write anything more than a very simple letter, at least four or five hours should be set aside to get to grips with some of the multitude of features. Writers will find *WordPerfect's* spelling checker, and especially its thesaurus, a real boon. The checker consistently offers the widest choice of alternatives. Similarly, the thesaurus offers the widest choice of words in a very organised fashion. It's so good, in fact, there is a danger of following every hypertext-like lead just because they are there. *WordPerfect* is an excellent professional tool, which is reflected in the price, but beginners should leave it alone.

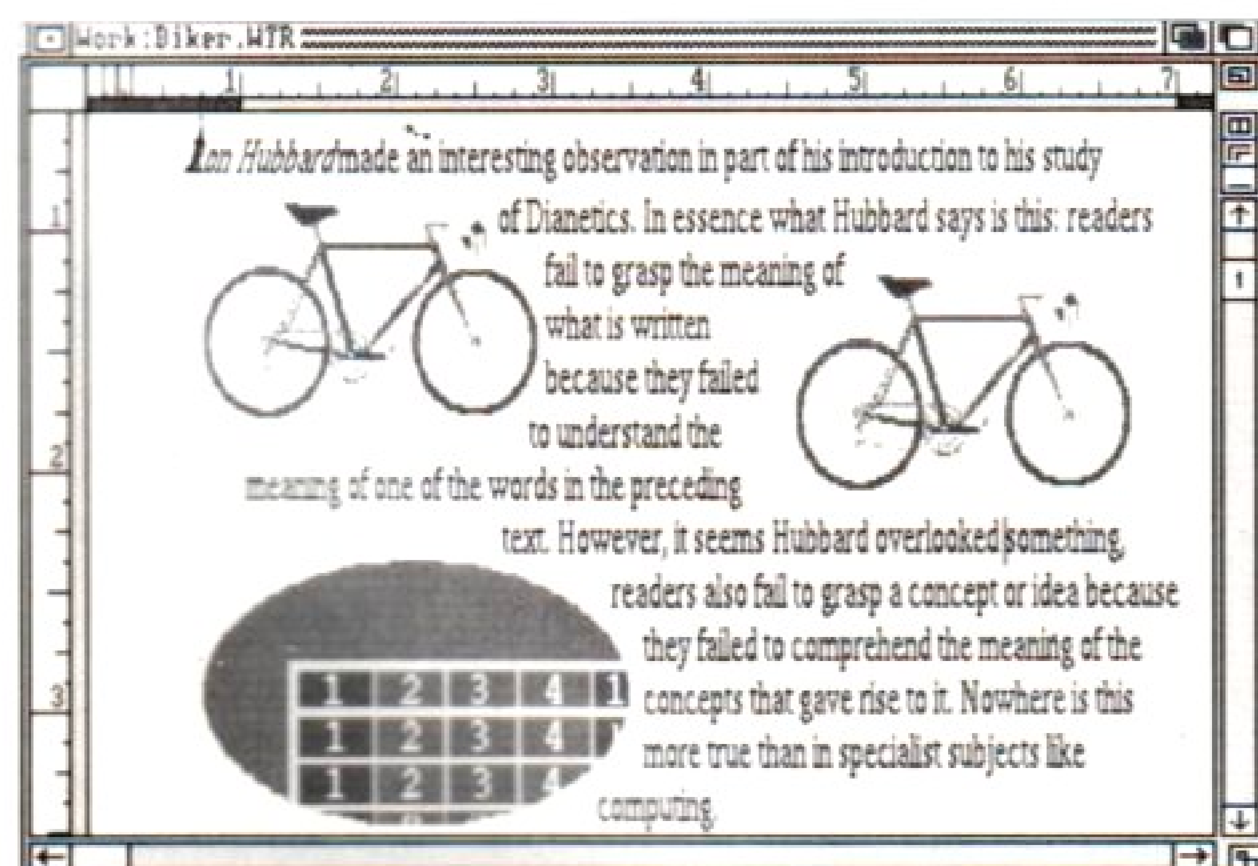
Smartness and slickness of presentation is the hallmark of the 'new breed' of word processors, often called word publishers because they have some of the features of a desktop publishing system. Being able to import, shape and resize pictures is important, as is the ability to run text round the illustrations to make odd shapes.





RIGHT and BELOW TOP are examples of the fairly basic work offered by *KindWords*.





BELOW MIDDLE and BELOW BOTTOM: the hogher price of *Pen Pal* is repaid not only in ease of use, but also by the sophisticated handling of graphics and clever text flowing.

WORD PUBLISHERS

KINDWORDS

The Disc Company £49.95

KindWords is the cheapest true document processor for the Amiga, has the lowliest overall specification and has been largely superseded – in terms of pure performance – by recent offerings like *Pen Pal* and *Prowrite*. However, low cost also implies affordablity.

The checker is excellent and consistently offered the same alternative phonetic spellings as *Protext* 5. *KindWords* also scores over *Protext* by having a Thesaurus with 470,000 synonyms, while its other competitor *Prowrite* can only refer to 300,000 synonyms. Only?

That's the good news. The bad news is that even for the smallest of documents *KindWords* is incredibly slow. Even running under Workbench 1.3 on an Amiga 3000 it was sluggish. Printing quality is claimed to be enhanced using the Superfonts feature, but these were a disappointment using a simple 9-pin (Star LC-10) and the range of font options limited to those supplied with the package.

KindWords is a brave attempt to make a user-friendly word publisher with some very powerful features, yet keep the price under £50. It would have succeeded if it were about ten times faster and could use Amiga fonts. For pure word processing it's usable and easy to get to grips with. As a word publisher it falls several grades short of the required mark.

PEN PAL

Softwood Inc. £129.95

Anyone paying over £100 for a single piece of Amiga productivity software expects to get something special and, without beating around the bush, this is very special. This review was compiled without referring back to the extensive documentation once: *Pen Pal's* strength is that it leads the new user through every function without over-complication.

For instance, along each side of the screen is a set of document tool icons: graphics drawing, show page, drawing colour and so on. As the pointer passes over each tool, a miniature help bar describing its function appears as part of the mouse pointer sprite! Similarly, when *Pen Pal* is busy the pointer changes to a sliding bar animation showing how much time the program expects the operation to take.

Another strength is the graphics import. *Pen Pal* can import almost any standard IFF picture file including HAM and even hi-res HAM. Once the picture (or brush) is loaded, text can be flowed around the contours of the











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Screen shots from the Amiga

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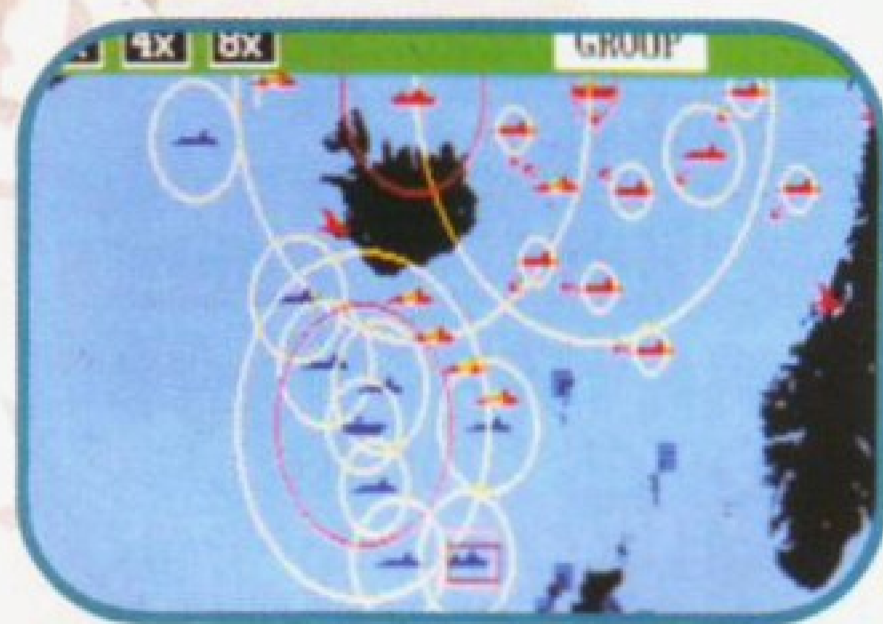
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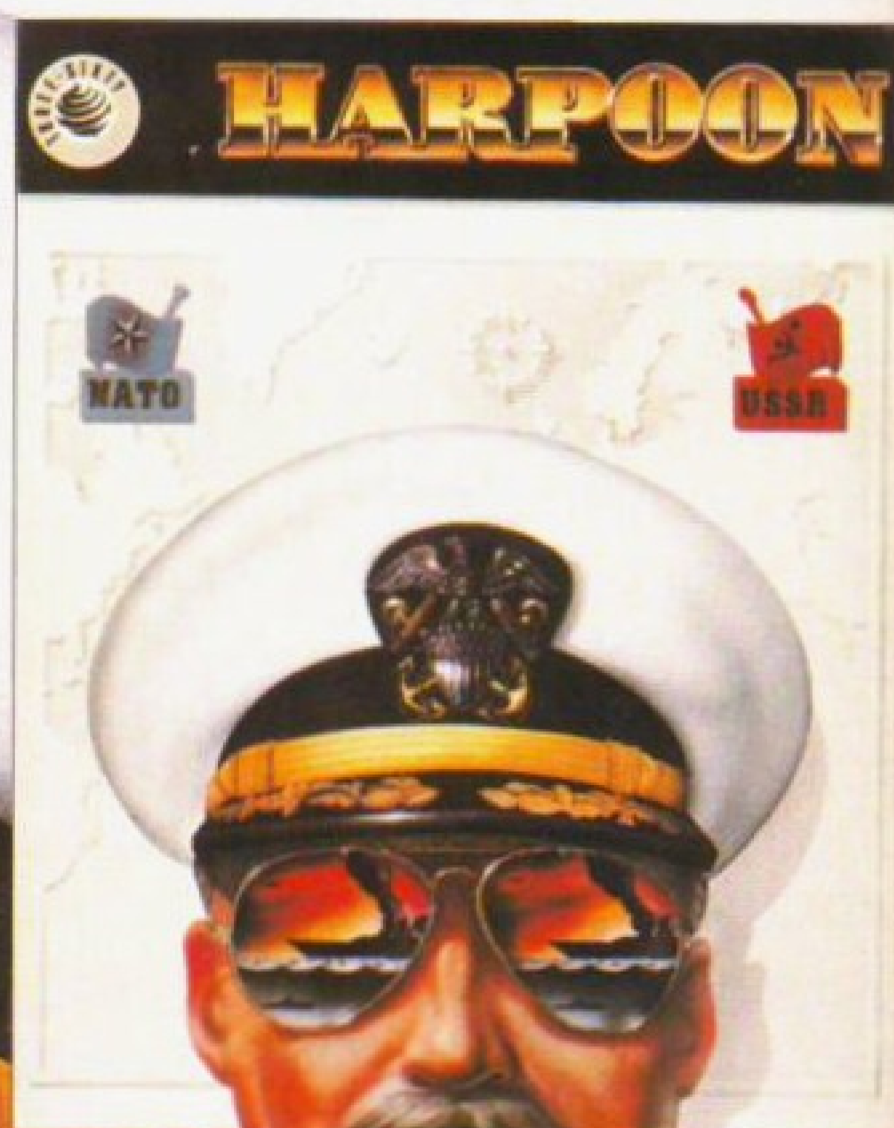
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Ron Hubbard
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SPECIAL

THE WORD ACCORDING TO SPELLING CHECKERS

Everyone makes typos – theat's tysping mistooks, to the uninitiated – so to ensure that none of the checkers got an unfair advantage, two tests were devised. The first test took the first option offered by the guessing facility when a suspect word was flagged. At the end the summary percentage of accuracy was calculated and entered in the comparison chart.

In a second test a series of words were introduced with deliberate errors. These were incorrect vowel, transposed letters, missing consonant, incorrect use of lower case, phonetic spelling, missing vowel sound, incorrect use of contraction (apostrophe missing), missing hyphen. Two percentages were calculated from this list. First, the percentage of words offered incorrectly. Secondly, the percentage of words baffling the checker (in other words, no alternative spelling was offered).

To calculate the final score, the two percentages in the second test were subtracted from the percentage "hit rate" from the first test. This gives an overall score which separates the men from the boys. These values appear here and in the summary table elsewhere in this feature. These are just typical values calculated from a random set of words. Using a different set of words, *WordPerfect* could supplant both *Protext* and *KindWords.* Like all statistics, these should only be used as guidance – never as gospel.

	A%	B%	C%	D
Protext 5	89	0	6	83
Kindwords 2	90	0	13	77
WordPerfect	85	0	25	60
Pen Pal	84	19	6	59
Office Write	92	13	25	54
Protext 4	85	19	19	47
Prowrite	81	13	25	43
Scribble 2	78	13	31	34

Score key
A: Percentage accuracy of phonetic check
B: Percentage of words confusing the checker – no alternative found
C: Percentage of words offered incorrectly – no correct alternative
D: A-(B+C)

The following paragraph demonstrates just how good (or bad) some spelling checkers can be. Spelling checkers can only find words which already exist in their dictionaries, but the guessing feature is the nub of this little gem. There is at least one simple mistake none of the spelling checkers could spot, though – see if you can – because while the word is correctly spelt, it's the wrong word! This test reinforces the argument that there's no substitute for reading carefully the printed version of what you wrote. Always edit on a draft quality hard copy BEFORE committing it to letter quality or incorporating graphics.

THE ORIGINAL

L. On Hubbard made an intiresting observashun in part of his introdcution to his study of Dianetics. In escence what Hubbard says is this: readers fail to grasp the meening of what is ritten because the failed to understand the meening of one of the words in the preseeding text. However, it seems Hubbard overluked somethin, readers also fail to grasp a consept or idae becos thay failed to comrpehend the meening of the concepts that gave ryse to it. Nowhere is this more tru than in speshulist subbjects like computin.

PROTEXT V4

L. on Hubbard made an interesting observashun in part of his introduction to his study of Diabetics. In essence what Hubbard says is this: readers fail to grasp the meaning of what is rotten because the failed to understand the meening of one of the words in the preseeding text. However, it seems Hubbard overluked something, readers also fail to grasp a concept or idea becos hay failed to comprehend the meaning of the concepts that gave rye to it. Nowhere is this more try than in speshulist subjects like computing.

PROTEXT 5

L. On Hauberk made an interesting observation in part of his introduction to his study of Adenitis. In essence what Hauberk says is this: readers fail to grasp the meaning of what is written because the failed to understand the meaning of one of the words in the presiding text. However, it seems Hauberk overlooked something, readers also fail to grasp a concept or idea bodes than failed to commorient the meaning of the concepts that gave rise to it. Nowhere is this more true than in specialist subjects like computing.

KINDWORDS 2

L. On Hauberk made an interesting observation in part of his introdcution to his study of Adenitis. In essence what Hauberk says is this: readers fail to grasp the meaning of what is written because the failed to understand the

image with ease, though with large images this can take some time.

Mail merge freaks will find the built-in database a real breeze. It's a very simple flat card database with few fancy features, but more than sufficient for jobs which require a mailshot facility.

Professional writers will find the package easy to use and fast enough – if a little too cute – but document size is limited by available memory. The spelling checker is adequate, with the added bonus that the program will calculate a readability index for you – this article, for instance, has a readability index of 12.27, suitable for someone with a college education. There is little to fault *Pen Pal* and it deserves to do well.



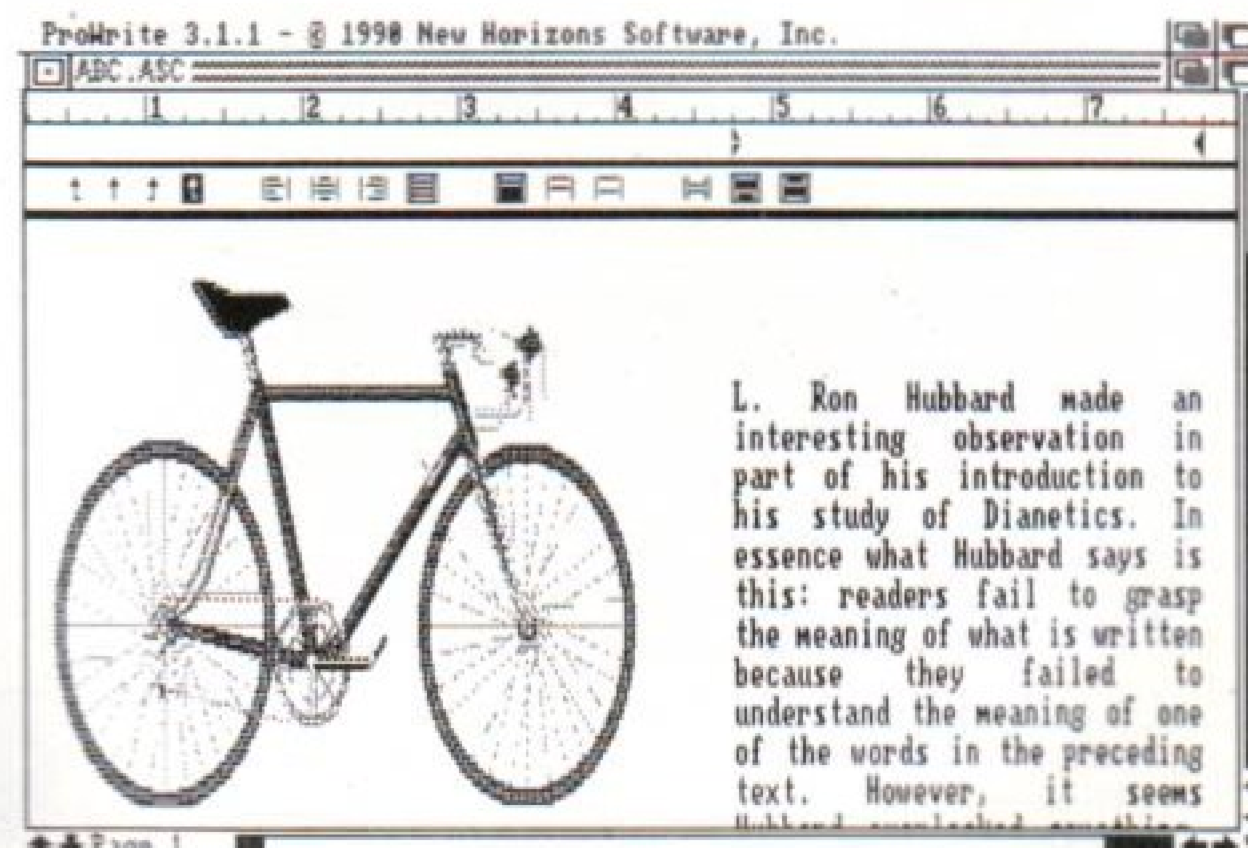
ABOVE: Although *Prowrite* is the most expensive Word Publisher on the market, it also offers professional quality and presentation. Here a typeface is being chosen from the menu.

BELOW: Graphics import in *Prowrite* is less powerful than *Pen Pal*, but the cleaner presentation of the user interface will be preferred by some.

PROWRITE

New Horizons £139.95

Prowrite is (by a short head) the most expensive word publisher for the Amiga. *Protext 5* and *WordPerfect* cost more but they are aimed at a different market altogether. At first glance, it could almost be confused with *KindWords*, yet it's everything *KindWords* should be but isn't. Furthermore it lacks the cute features found in *Pen Pal*. This should not be viewed as belittling *Prowrite*. Far from it, this cleanliness should win it favour



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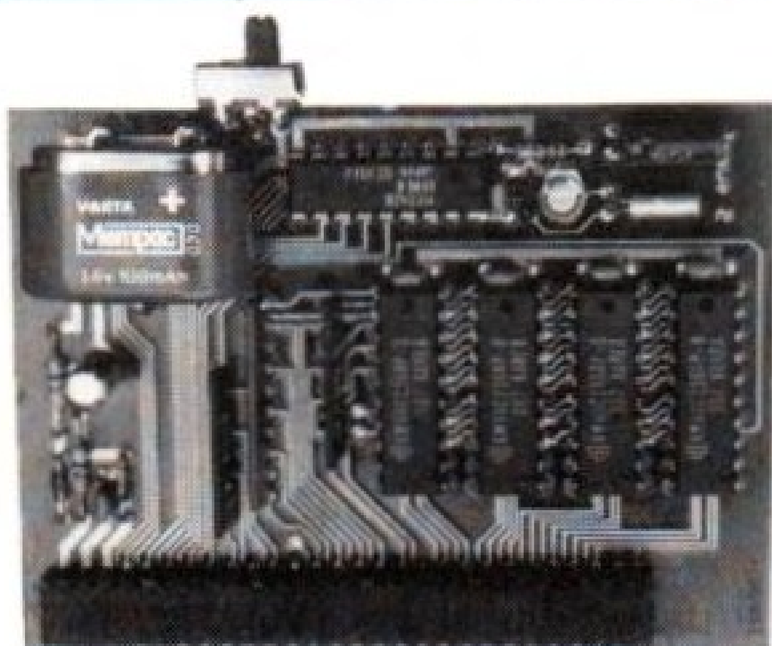
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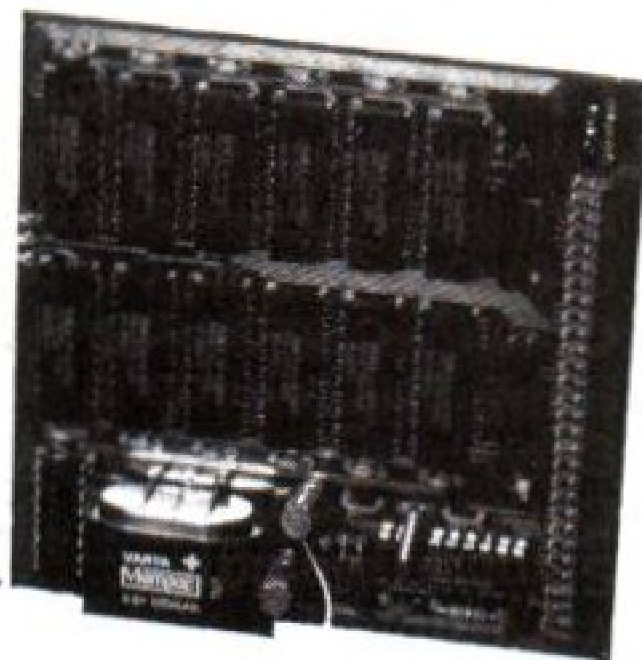
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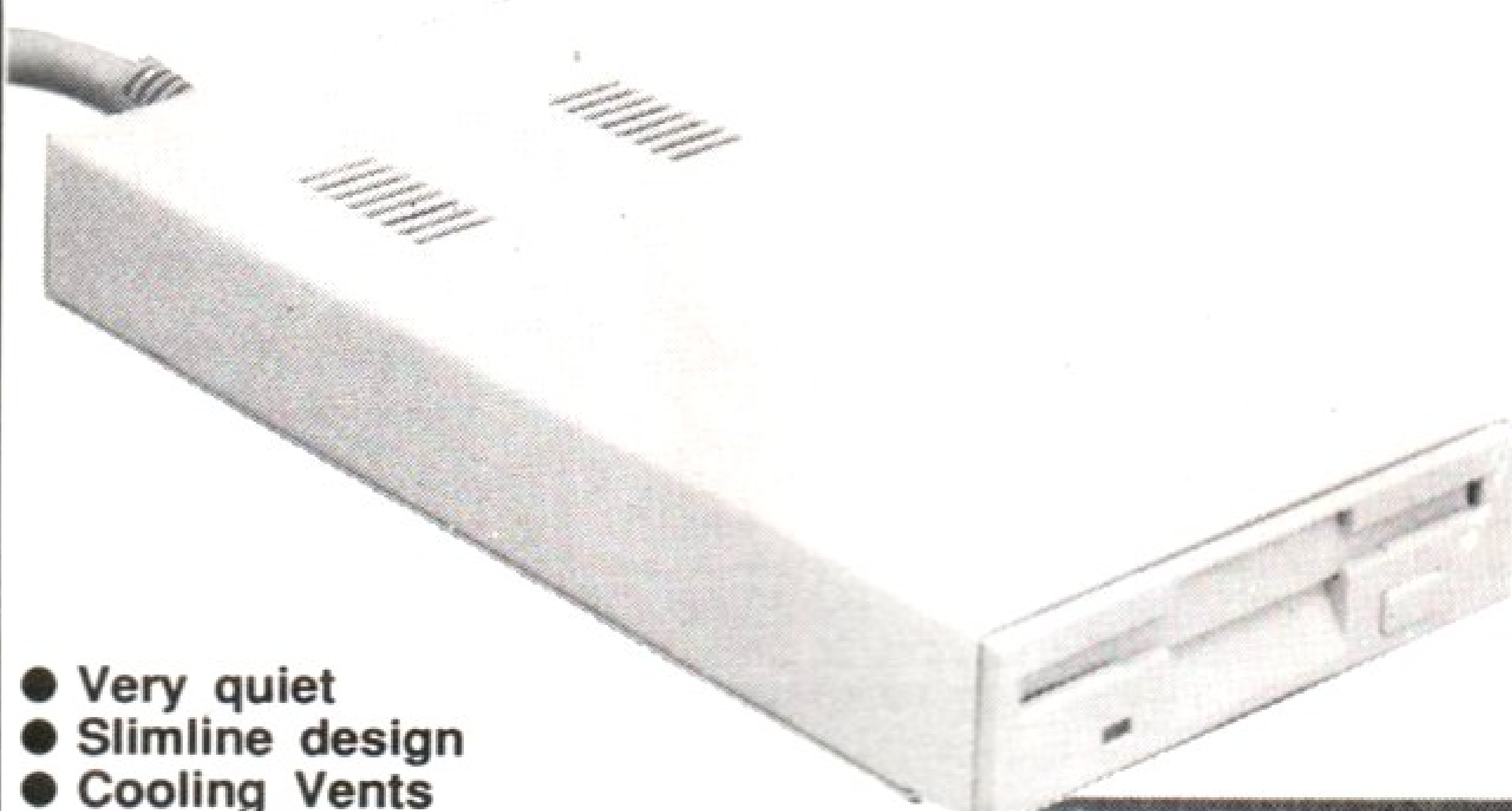
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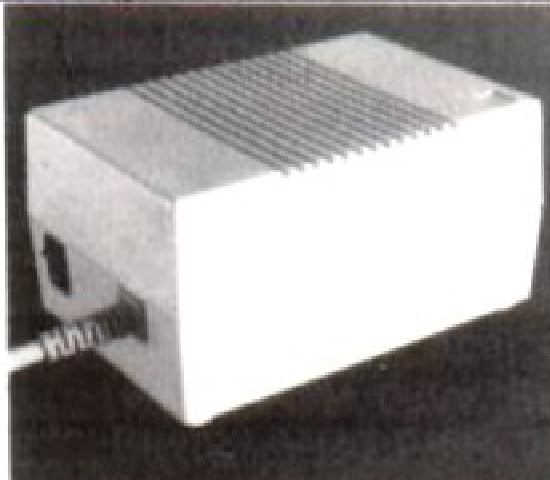
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Ron Hubbard
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SPECIAL

with professional people (perhaps used to Windows on a PC) who want to get down to the job.

What it loses on the curves, *Prowrite* makes up for on the straight with a powerful thesaurus. In terms of speed, although fast for what it does, *Prowrite* appears slightly slower than *Pen Pal* – until graphics are used. Graphics import is less powerful than in *Pen Pal* and it lacks the facility to flow text around pictures, let alone to contour it. Text can be forced to flow around windows with little effort but this should have been made an automatic option.

Prowrite also offers features such as automatic columnation. This makes it ideal for producing newsletters and reports. The multiple line headers and footers are easily reached – kept separate from the document to aid editing. However, it lacks any form of full-page preview feature, which seems an oversight. This sort of overview is essential when producing a document with complex layouts and a variety of styles, to ensure the whole thing gels together before committing it to print.

Cavils aside, *Prowrite* stands up well in the face of some stiff competition and it's hard to choose between it and Pen Pal since each has its virtues and vices. If fancy layouts or a built-in database are prerequisites then *Pen Pal* would have to be first choice, always remembering that *Prowrite* has the extra benefit of a thesaurus and on average tends to be faster. ■

Suppliers:
The author wishes to thank the following for their support:

Protext v4 & v5
Arnor (0733) 68909

WordPerfect, Pen Pal, Office Write, Platinum Works, Prowrite, KindWords,
HB Marketing (0753) 686000

meaning of one of the words in the presiding text. However, it seems Hauberk overlooked something, readers also fail to grasp a concept or idea bodes than failed to comrpehend the meaning of the concepts that gave rise to it. Nowhere is this more true than in specialist subjects like computing.

SCRIBBLE 2

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PRO WRITE

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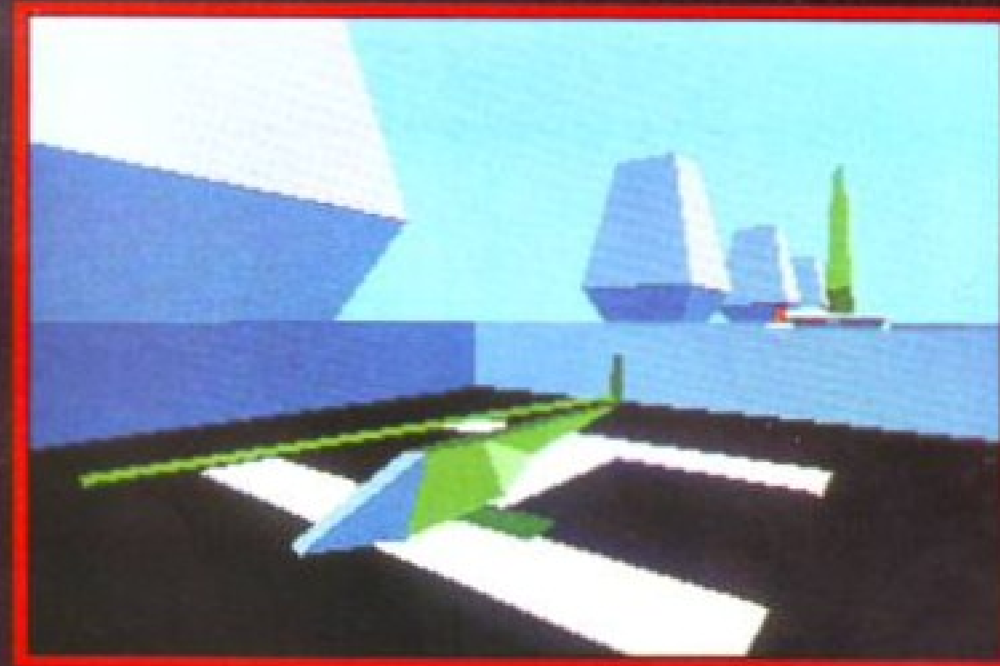
WORDPERFECT

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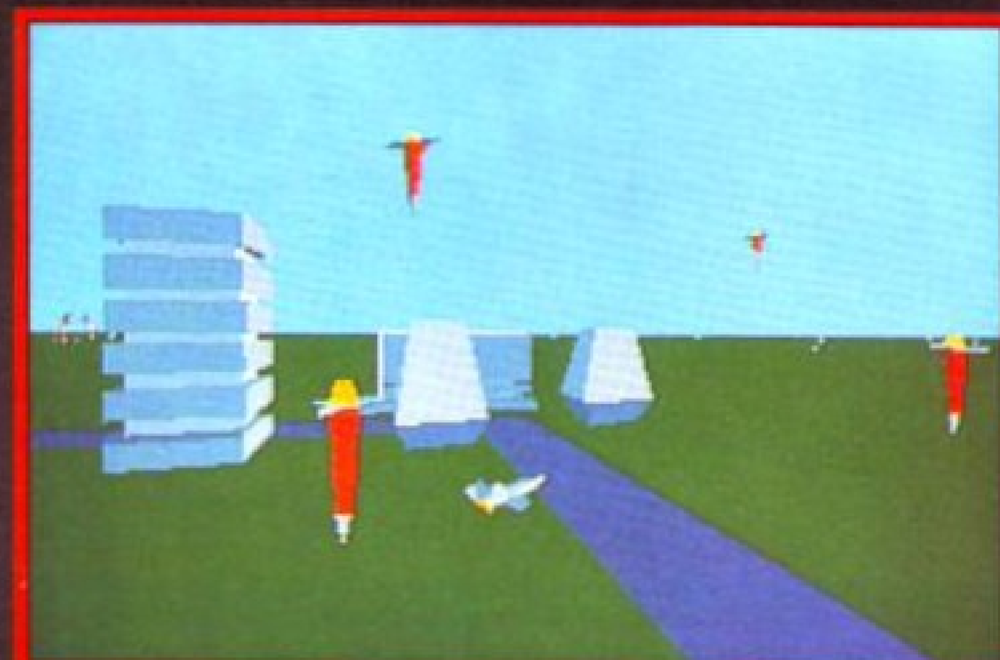
Package Name	WYSIWYG	Graphics Import	Mail Merge	Speed	RAM Rqd	Clmns	Ease of use	Display Fonts	Multi file	Spelling Checker	A% (see text)	B%	C%	D%	Thesaurus Cross-refs
Protext 5	Partial	N	Y	3-5	1MB	N	45	N	Y	120,000	89	0	6	83	N
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Fast – not for beginners															
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Office Write	Partial	N	Y	5	512K	N	91	Y	Y	90,000	92	13	25	54	N
Fast, simple and cheap															
Protext 4	Partial	N	Y	4-5	512K	N	35	N	Y	70,000	85	19	19	47	N
Hard to use – but powerful															
Prowrite	Y	Y	Y	Y	1MB	Y	74	Y	Y	100,000	81	13	25	43	300,000
Friendly and powerful															
Scribble 2	Partial	N	Y	3	512K	N	75	N	Y	?	78	13	31	34	N
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Microword	Preview	N	Y	3	512K	N	64	N	N	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	N
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Notes:
Ease of use: Marks out of 100 for how much time it takes to get into a system without reading the manual first. This includes file selectors, cutting and pasting, font selection and so on.
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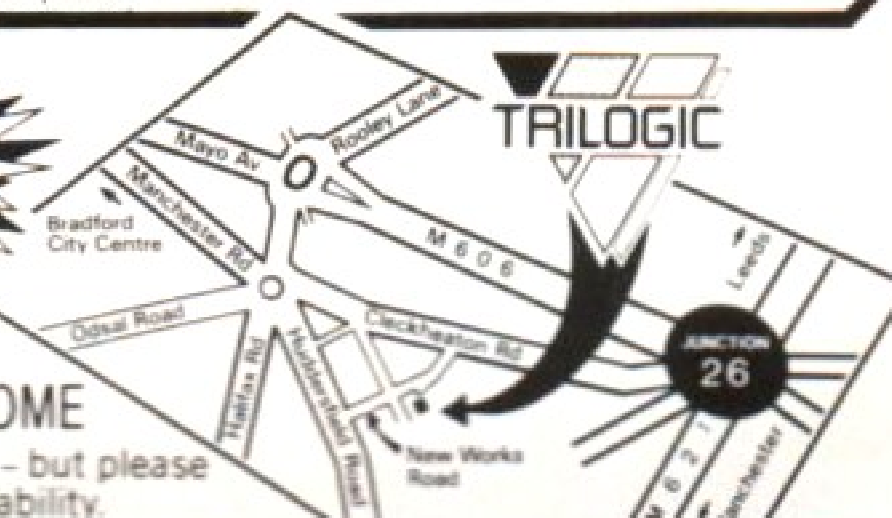
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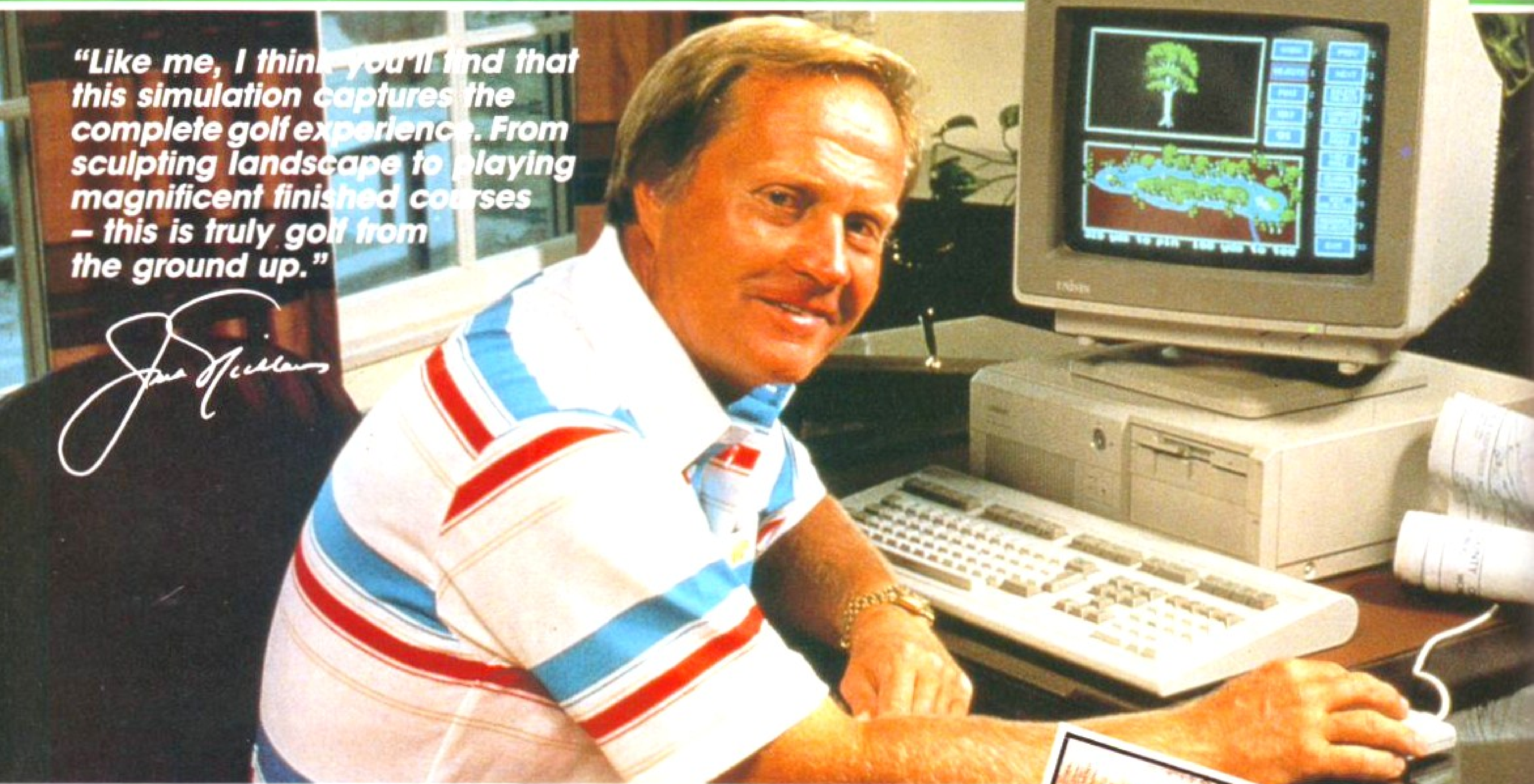
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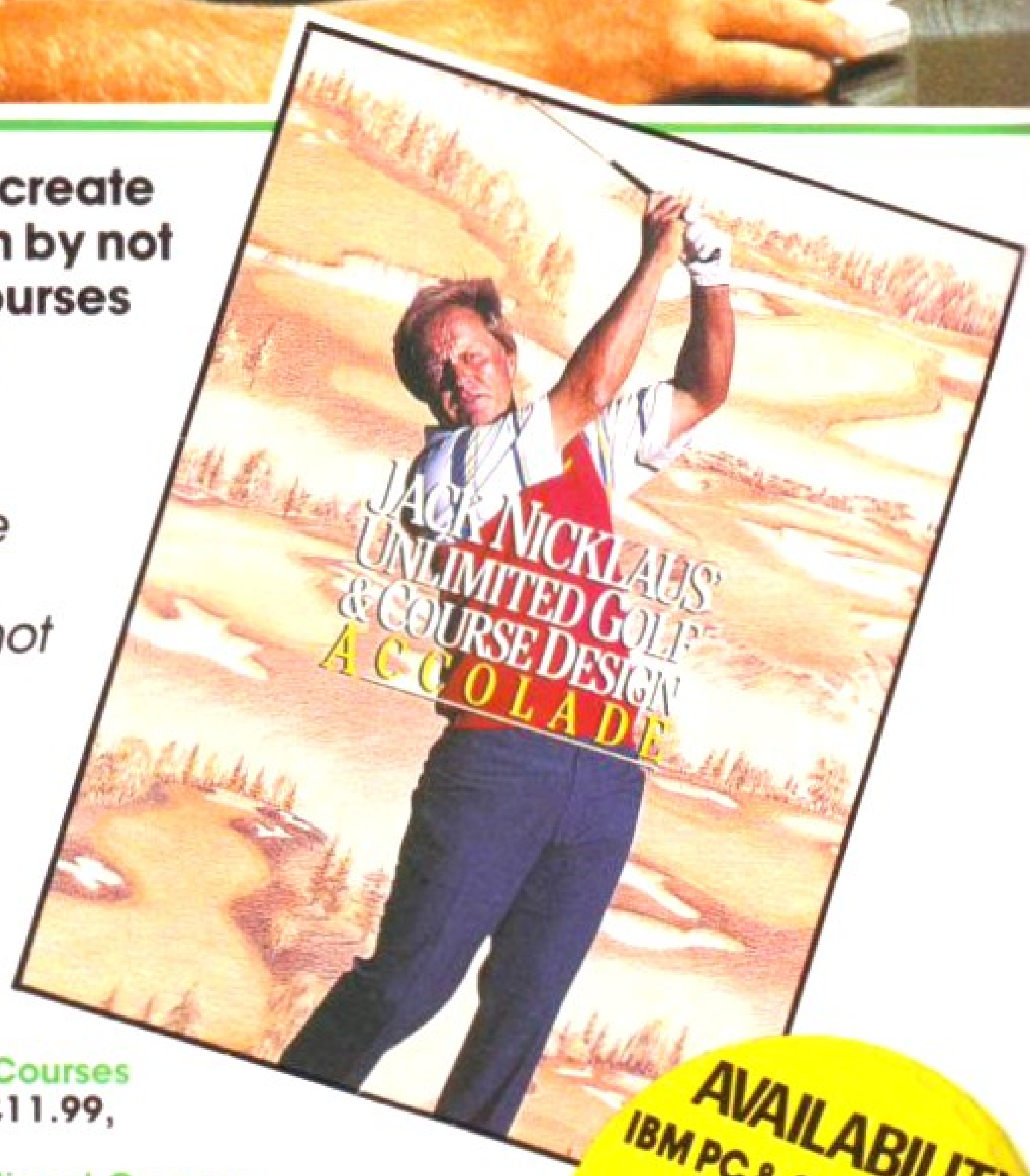
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The solution? Automate the whole process. And that, by way of an introduction, is exactly what the *Search* utility does. Given only a disk drive name it will search every directory on the disk in that drive and look at every file present. At the end of the day it identifes a number of useful file types and gives you their full paths and filenames.

Search is a CLI utility and it's dead easy to use. To search a disk in drive DF0: you'd just open a CLI and type...

SEARCH DF0:

After a short delay (which depends on how many files are on the disk) back will come the required info. You'll find other usage details in Disk Extra on Page 99, but if you want to know about how *Search* was written and how it works, then keep reading...

AmigaDOS Fundamentals

The bulk of the program uses AmigaDOS functions to look at directories and files: So, before we can talk about the program, there's some preliminary explaining to do. The AmigaDOS resident library consists of a small core of routines which simplify the interface between a program and the Amiga's disk filing system. In short, it's simply not possible to write routines which search AmigaDOS directories or file structures unless these disk access functions are understood.

Locks and Lock()

You'll come across the term 'Lock' quite often in the AmigaDOS literature. It's a data structure used by AmigaDOS and, if you look in the 'dosextens.h' header file, you'll see this particular definition:

```
struct FileLock {
    BPTR fl_Link;           /* A bcpl pointer to next lock */
    LONG fl_Key;            /* disk block number */
    LONG fl_Access;         /* exclusive or shared */
    struct MsgPort *fl_Task;/* Handler task's port */
    BPTR fl_Volume;         /* A bcpl pointer to device list */
        };
```

You don't need to know much about these structures in order to use them but, for the curious, here's a brief run-down.

For starters, 'fl_Link', fl_Task and fl_Volume contain information which is really only of interest to AmigaDOS itself – you're unlikely to need these fields, and you certainly should not interfere with them. There are two fields which you may find occasional use for... these are the fl_Key field, which is the location on disk of the directory or file header block, and the fl_Access field, which shows whether the lock is for a 'shared read' or 'exclusive write'.

The AmigaDOS routine which initializes such structures for you is called Lock() and has the following format:

lock_pointer = Lock(name, mode)

The first parameter, 'name', is a normal C string pointer, ie the start address of a null terminated string. The second parameter, 'mode' can take one of two values ACCESS_READ or ACCESS_WRITE. The values for these items are defined in the dos.h header file with SHARED_LOCK and EXCLUSIVE_LOCK being defined as acceptable synonyms.

The Lock() function will return either a valid pointer to a FileLock structure, or it will return a zero indicating failure. If, as an example, you want to get a shared read lock on the root directory of DF1: you could use Lock() like this...

```
RootDirLock = Lock ("DF1:", ACCESS_READ);
```

The zero failure convention is convenient because it allows us to use implicit conditional testing. This means that instead of having to write this type of code...

```
RootDirLock = Lock ("DF1:", ACCESS_READ);
if (RootDirLock!=NULL)
{ actions to be performed; }
```

we can use the more concise implicit test form...

```
if (RootDirLock = Lock ("DF1:",ACCESS_READ))
{ actions to be performed; }
```

In both cases the call to Lock(), if successful, results in RootDirLock containing a pointer to the appropriate FileLock structure. Once such a FileLock pointer is available there are two routines, Examine() and ExNext(), which enable detailed information to be obtained about the directories and files present in this part of the file or directory structure.

Examine()

This routine uses your lock pointer to complete a 'FileInfoBlock' structure. The FileInfoBlock structure is defined in the dos.h header file and, because it holds some very useful information, is worthy of special attention: Firstly let's look at the layout...

```
struct FileInfoBlock {
LONG fib_DiskKey;
LONG fib_DirEntryType;      /* Type */
char fib_FileName[108];     /* Name of the file or directory
*/
LONG fib_Protection;        /* Bit mask */
LONG fib_EntryType; LONG fib_Size;  /* File size in bytes */
LONG fib_NumBlocks;         /* Number of blocks in file */
struct DateStamp fib_Date; /* Date file was last changed */
char fib_Comment[116];      /*Comment associated with file
*/};
```

The 'fib_DirEntryType' field enables you to distinguish between a directory and a file. If fib_DirEntryType<0 then the information relates to a file, if fib_DirEntryType>0 then we have information about a directory.

Although the filename has a current maxium of 30 characters the extra space in the structure may be used by AmigaDOS at a later date – so it's best not to regard the extra space as being available for your own use. The fib_Protection field is currently only 'partly implemented' – the lower four bits of the mask have been defined for some time and now bit 4 itself has been designated as an 'archive' bit (cleared whenever a file which has been written to is closed, or a directory is updated).

archive bit	bit 4
reads	not allowed if bit 3 is set
writes	not allowed if bit 2 is set
execution	not allowed if bit 1 is set
deletion	not allowed if bit 0 is set

You do, incidentally, have to be careful when you set up a FileInfoBlock structure because it must be long word aligned. The standard approach is to use AllocMem() to allocate the memory like this:

```
£define FILEBLOCKSIZE = (LONG)(sizeof(struct FileInfoBlock))
info_block_p = (struct FileInfoBlock *)

    AllocMem(FILEBLOCKSIZE,MEMF_PUBLIC);
```

The Examine() routine itself takes the following form:

```
Boolean success/fail = Examine (file_lock_p, file_info_p)
```

To use the Examine() function you provide the pointers to both the file block and a FileInfoBlock structure. Examine() attempts to fill your info block with details of the first file or directory associated with the lock and will return a zero if it fails.

To step through the entries associated with a particular lock we use the ExNext() function. This takes the same parameters as Examine() but uses and modifies your existing FileInfoBlock so that its data reflects the next entry found. If there are no further entries then ExNext() returns a zero indicating failure. It's usually best to check that any error return is of the type you are expecting and there's a general error routine to help...

IoErr()

As a rule, when an AmigaDOS function fails you can get additional information about the cause of the failure by calling a routine called IoErr(). The format of the call is straightforward.

error = IoErr()

The complete list of the error codes which are returned are available in the dos.h header file, but here are the most useful ones...

Error	Flag	Actual Value
£define	ERROR_NO_DEFAULT_DIR	201
£define	ERROR_OBJECT_IN_USE	202
£define	ERROR_DIR_NOT_FOUND	204
£define	ERROR_INVALID_LOCK	211
£define	ERROR_DISK_NOT_VALIDATED	213
£define	ERROR_DISK_WRITE_PROTECTED	214
£define	ERROR_DIRECTORY_NOT_EMPTY	216
£define	ERROR_TO_MANY_LEVELS	217
£define	ERROR_DEVICE_NOT_MOUNTED	218
£define	ERROR_SEEK_ERROR	219
£define	ERROR_DISK_FULL	221
£define	ERROR_DELETE_PROTECTED	222
£define	ERROR_WRITE_PROTECTED	223
£define	ERROR_READ_PROTECTED	224
£define	ERROR_NOT_A_DOS_DISK	225
£define	ERROR_NO_DISK	226
£define	ERROR_NO_MORE_ENTRIES	232

When we get a 'lock' on a particular directory we effectively obtain access to a particular 'node' of the selected file/directory tree. Examine() and ExNext() provides us with the means of identifying the components of that node, ie of identifying both the files present and any further directories present.

To illustrate the type of code you would use to search such a 'node' I've written a short CLI-based program which obtains a shared read lock on a directory, allocates the necessary FileInfoBlock memory, and then use Examine() and ExNext() to step through the entries that are present. It uses the fib_DirEntryType to decide if an entry is a file or a directory.

Locks must be always removed before a program terminates otherwise AmigaDOS will never realise you've finished with the file. The routine which does this is called UnLock() – it's an easy routine to use as you'll see from the program.

The Search Program

The code for *Search* splits nicely into four parts. Firstly comes the section which details the include files, prototypes, £defines and globals variables which are being used. Secondly, there is the main code which looks like this:

```
main(int argc, TEXT *argv[])
{
printf(error[0]); /* sign on message */
if (argc!=2) {printf(error[1]);}
    else {
    CreateLevel(argv[1]);
    if(global_error) {printf(error[global_error]);}
    }
} /* logical end of program */
```

Not much to it, is there? A sign-on message is printed and, providing the correct number of CLI arguments (that is, two) have been given, the program then carries out a routine called CreateLevel(). This routine takes as its parameter the second CLI argument (which is hopefully the device name types by the user).

The CreateLevel() and FileCheck() Routines

CreateLevel() is the routine which does most of the work. It's fairly short, needing around 30 lines of source code, and it operates like this: it takes a pointer to a name (which could be a filename, directory name or a drive name) and attempts to obtain a lock on it. If it succeeds it then tries to allocate some memory for a FileInfoBlock and, if that also succeeds, does an Examine() and checks the details filled in by AmigaDOS.

At this time a local copy of the name provided as the original name parameter is modified to reflect the pathway to the current lock and all entries are then examined using AmigaDOS's ExNext() function. Two things are possible.

One: an entry may be a file. Our program then has to open the file, partially read into a buffer, and look at enough bytes to recognise the file type. I've opted for an almost trivial routine here – FileCheck() opens the file and loads the first 12 bytes into a buffer – just sufficient to read the Standard MIDI File MThd identifer or an IFF FORM and a secondary identifier so that the normal types of ILBMs, 8SVXs etc can be recognised. You'll find the code in the source version of the program.

It's a routine that took five minutes to write and it does its job well enough, considering the intended purpose... so please, no complaints about not looking deeper into the IFF chunk structures!

Two: an entry may be another directory! Here's where the clever stuff comes in. If we've found another directory we've got to examine that in exactly the same way that we are examining the current directory. We'd have to lock it, examine it and search through the node entries. If in doing this we found yet more directories, then the same procedures would again need to be re-started.

The solution to the problem is described in the box and the piece of code which appears over the page...

The answer is... Recursion. Write the AmigaDOS node-handling routine in a way which allows it to call itself. This is exactly what I did for the CreateLevel() routine – you'll see that the moment it find a reference to a directory it calls itself, passing a copy of the path to the newly-found directory as the new argument. Here's the code.

This type of recursive search approach is a bit complicated the first time it's met, but it is worth learning about – when used with data structures that can be recursively defined (such as AmigaDOS's tree structure directory system) a little bit of code can do an awful lot of work for you! Anyway, that's enough of the techie rubbish for this month!

```
void CreateLevel(TEXT *imported_path)
{ .
TEXT exported_path[300];
struct FileLock *FrameLock_p,*Lock();
struct FileInfoBlock *fib_p;
     if(FrameLock_p=Lock(imported_path,ACCESS_READ))
            {
                     if (fib_p=(struct FileInfoBlock *)AllocMem(FIB_SIZE,MEMF_PUBLIC))
                              {
                                        if(Examine(FrameLock_p,fib_p))
                                                  {
                                                  while(ExNext(FrameLock_p,fib_p))
                                                              {
                                                              strcpy(exported_path,imported_path); /* copy name */
                                                              if(exported_path[strlen(exported_path)-1]!=':')
                                                                          {strcat(exported_path,"/");}
                                                              strcat(exported_path,fib_p->fib_FileName);
                                                              if(fib_p->fib_DirEntryType<0)
                                                                          { /* FILE FOUND SO LOOK AT IT */
                                                                          FileCheck(exported_path);
                                                                          }
                                                                          else { /* SET UP A NEW FRAME */
                                                                                      CreateLevel(exported_path);
                                                                                      }
                                                              }
                                                  }
                                        } else {global_error=4;} /* Examine() failed */
                              FreeMem(fib_p,FIB_SIZE);
                     } else {global_error=3;} /* AllocMem() failed */
            UnLock(FrameLock_p);
     } else {global_error=2;} /* Lock() failed */
}
```

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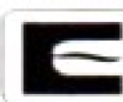
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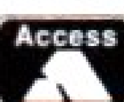
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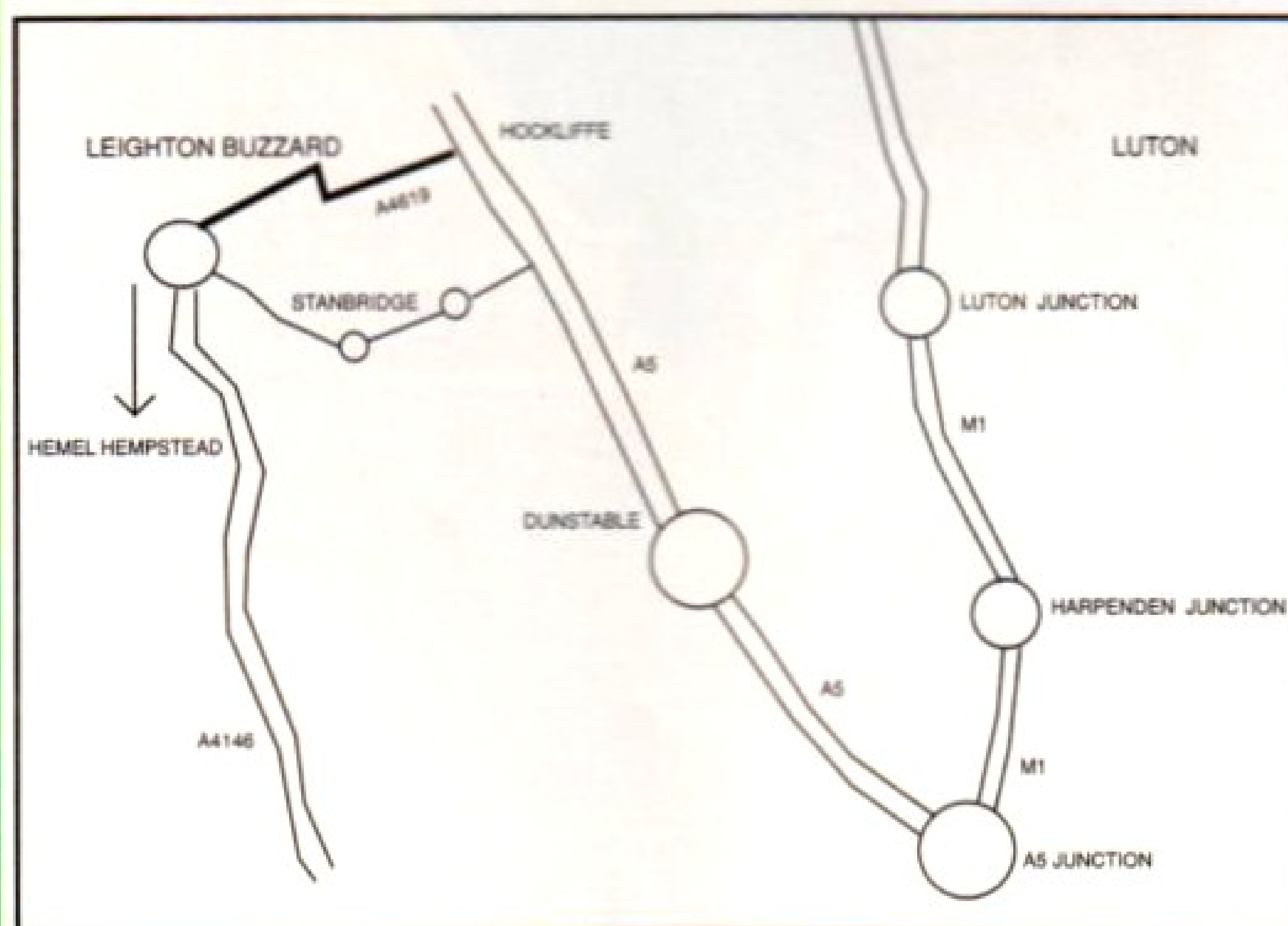
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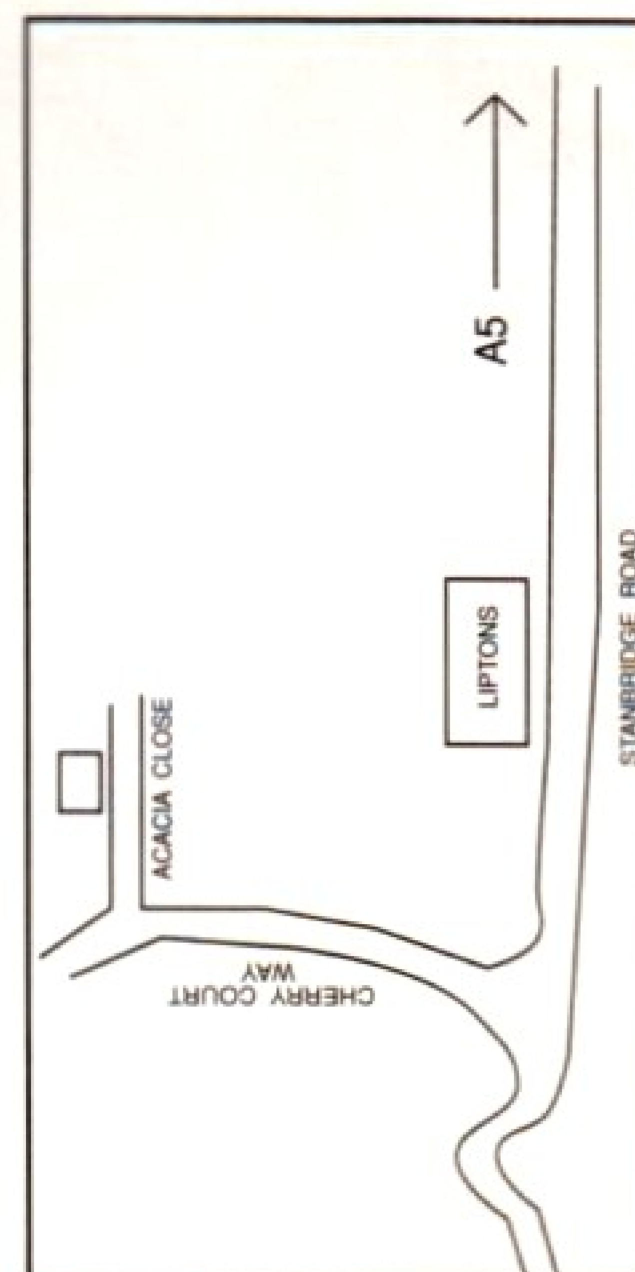
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Personal Banking

If you have trouble keeping track of where you money goes, your own Personal Finance Manager might help. **PAT WINSTANLEY** tries to find out precisely how...

In the days when virtually everyone received their wages in cash and paid all their bills in exactly the same way, keeping track of personal finances was considerably less complicated than it is today.

Now the trend is for everyone to have at least one bank account and probably a couple of credit cards. More and more people spread the cost of large bills by standing order and direct debit payments and almost everyone is now paid either by cheque or bank transfer.

The Money Program

Anyone who finds working out bank and credit card balances a nightmare is likely to welcome *Personal Finance Manager*. It has been designed by MichTron to handle bank, credit card and similar transactions both by easing the reconciliation process when the statement balance doesn't agree with your own calculations and by providing budget information in a variety of formats so that you can easily see where you have underspent or, more likely, overspent.

The heart of the system is a list of all transactions on a particular account, such as a bank account. Individual transactions are entered manually while standing orders can be set up which will automatically be entered at the appropriate date. As each transaction is entered into the system, the program sorts it into date order and shows the current balance on the screen.

Cheque Mate

It's most unlikely that your monthly statement will agree exactly with this balance, since cheques will normally show up on your statement several days or even weeks after being written. In order to check the accuracy of the statement it is necessary to reconcile the two balances.

Here the program can be very helpful. Simply feed the date and statement balance in, then sit back while it works out which entries in your list make up the balance on the statement. Assuming all goes well, listed items which do not appear on the statement will be shown ghosted on the screen for easy reference. To remove the ghosting while still recording balanced items, the system will then put a red tick by each checked entry. Then by switching off the ghosting your list will show all items appearing on the bank statement with a red tick beside them.

Sometimes the program will be unable to make a reconciliation, in which case you will have to resort to manual methods. The same system of checking entries can be done individually by either ticking or ghosting as required. Since ghosted entries are then removed from the running balance, this can be a quick method of reconciling your balance with the bank's opinion, without having to match each individual entry across to the bank statement.

Budget Games

The other feature of the program is the budget. As each item is entered in the main list it is allocated to a particular pre-defined category such as motor expenses, mortgage or gas and electricity. These categories are user-definable and are identified by a single key-press. Although only ten may be used at any time when defining the budget, these can be changed as required for checking less usual categories.

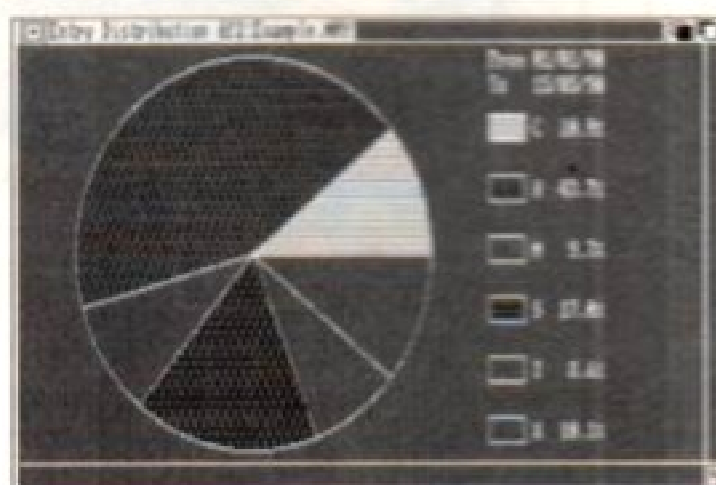
The categories are utilised in several ways. One of the most useful is to select only the entries for a particular category, which can then be listed to screen or printer. This would be useful for a (very) small business as a painless expenditure analysis method. Other uses for the categories concern the budget.

Both pie and bar charts can be produced showing up to 10 categories at a time. The pie chart simply shows the relative proportion for the various categories while the bar chart shows actual against budget expenditure. The third graphical display is a plot of the account balances between chosen dates, showing where and by how much you've dipped into the red. In each case the start and end dates can be adjusted, as can the categories involved. Unfortunately there seems to be no good way of actually printing these charts out.

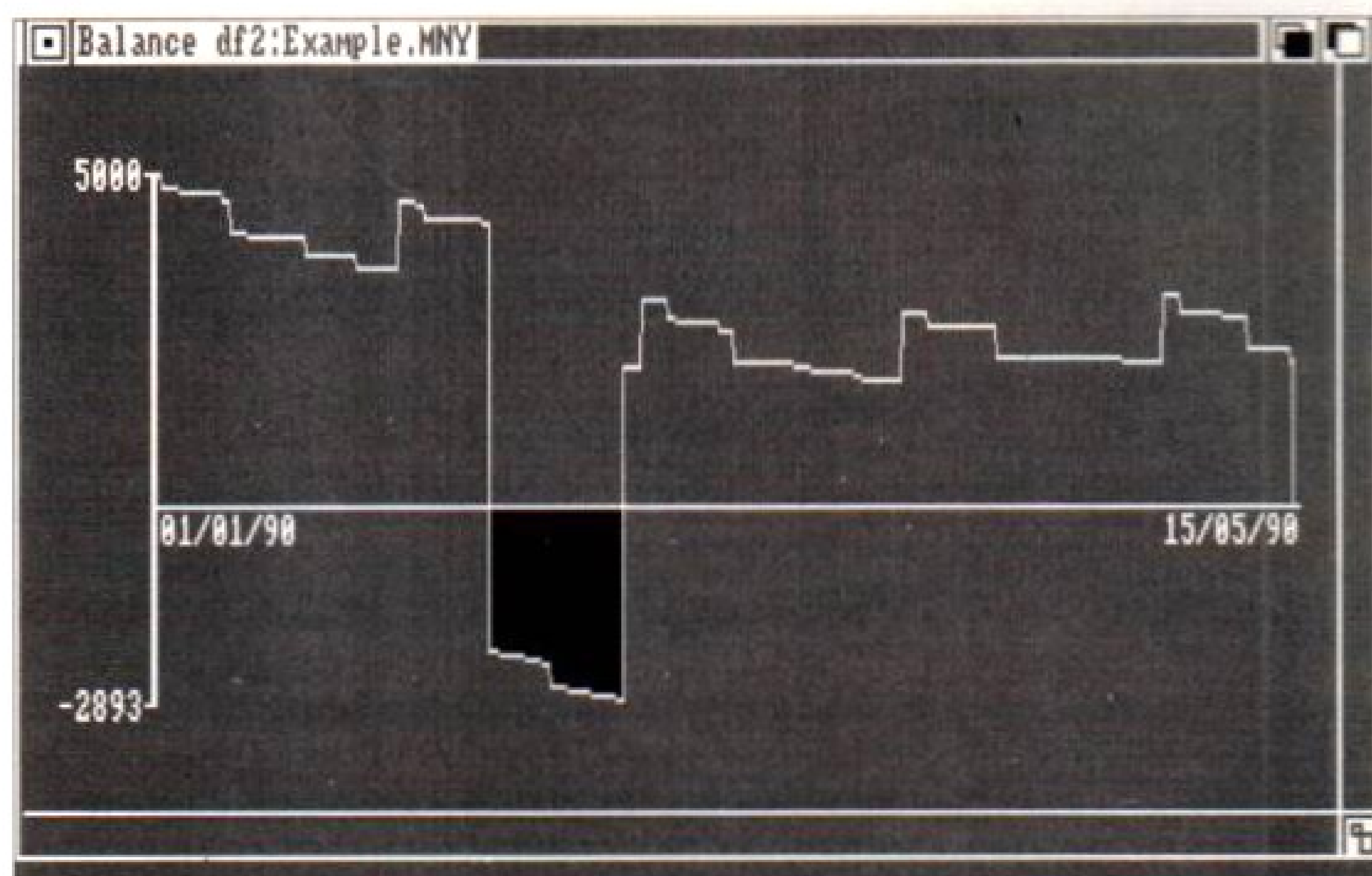
Account df2:Example.MNY

Date	Description	Debit	Credit	Code	Balance
01/01/90	Balance				5000.00
02/01/90	Savings	200.00		S	4800.00
04/01/90	Household shopping	55.25		C	4744.75
06/01/90	Club Membership	25.00		M	4719.75
09/01/90	Cash	75.00		M	4644.75
09/01/90	Shopping	55.43		C	4589.32
10/01/90	Mortgage	437.58		H	4151.74
11/01/90	Petrol	16.34		T	4135.40
12/01/90	Clothes	68.98		M	4066.42
16/01/90	Shopping	43.86		C	4022.56
19/01/90	Credit Card	225.63		X	3796.93
19/01/90	Petrol	14.56		T	3782.37
22/01/90	Insurance	24.22		M	3758.15
25/01/90	Car Tax	100.00		T	3658.15
25/01/90	Shopping	43.99		C	3614.16

ABOVE is shown a typical example of the kinds of entries made into the program over a period of time. Each entry has a budget allocation and a running balance is kept.



LEFT: Pie charts are available to show the proportion of your expenditure that has been spent on each part of the budget.



LEFT: Equally, bar graphs can be constructed to show graphically the state of your balance over a period of time. Try not to go so far into the red again, please!

Summing Up

Anyone running a small business could find the program useful both commercially and in personal matters, particularly if accounts are sometimes used for a mixture of business and personal transactions. The categorisation is both flexible and friendly, data entry and manipulation is clear and simple, and the budget system is easy to use. A good program for those who simply want the job done but don't need go-faster stripes to complicate things.

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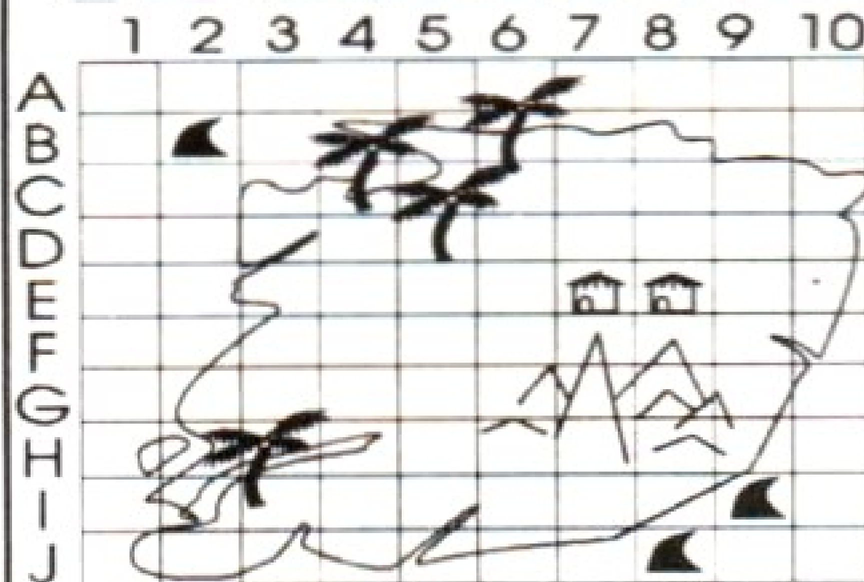
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So here I am, riding herd on six planets, checking out the cultists, keeping an eye on the droid assassins . . . same old stuff. Then, the idiots downtown decide they want me to bust up an "intergalactic drug ring".

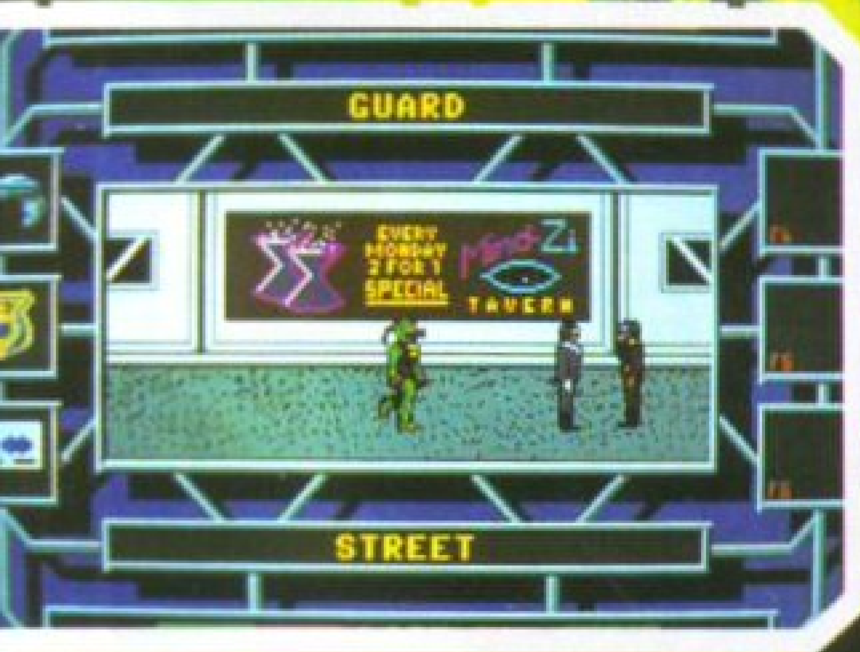
But, it's not all bad, I do get to see Betty the Body at the Mind Zi tavern. And I get a little high just walking in the front door of the Mentant Temple. Some things never change, though – the scariest dudes I talk to are still real estate brokers.

Like they say at the academy, you gotta look before you transport. One wrong move and a guy could end up an artichoke.

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LIGHT FORCE

In the first of two unusual educational games just in from Australia, **DAMIEN NOONAN** zaps aliens while learning about light rays...

Mission briefing: you will be transported to the pirate base, where you must make your way to the treasure vaults and 'liberate' the money that is stashed away inside. Along the way, the base's defences must be destroyed or they will destroy you.

You are in control of a tank which fires fireballs from its gun: these fireballs can be bounced off various mirror-like surfaces in the base to reach their targets. Warning: if you are careless with the fireballs' targetting, you may destroy the treasure vaults or the nuclear reactor that powers the base. In a worst-case scenario you will have only fifteen seconds to exit the base.

It doesn't sound much like education, does it? It certainly doesn't sound like secondary school Physics, either – but that's exactly what it is. Now correct me if I'm wrong, but I remember Physics as being cursed with the worst teachers on the curriculum and an interesting Physics lesson involved sticking a piece of paper tape to the back of a piece of wood with wheels attached and watching it roll down a short plank. No, we never zapped aliens in Physics in my day...

Light Work

Light Force is an excellent example of the idea of integrating a 'fun' concept with a specific area of learning. The package is intended to teach some of the basic principles of light and its behaviour: reflection and refraction in particular, but also how colours work. The clever thing is the way it does it.

The package comes on two disks and consists of three parts: a game, a tutorial and a set of exercises. The tutorial teaches the basic principles needed to master the subject at 'secondary school' level, which in this case certainly seems adequate for exam level up to the age of 16. The exercises are in the form of sets of ten multiple-choice questions, with an assessment at the end of each set.

An incentive to work through the slightly more 'tedious' part, the tutorial and take the brief tests is provided by the game. If you manage to pass one of the tests with a score of nine or ten out of ten, you are promoted to a higher rank within the game. It's a simple enough idea, but it certainly works.



The tests take the form of a series of multiple choice questions on the topics in the tutorials.

Light Guns

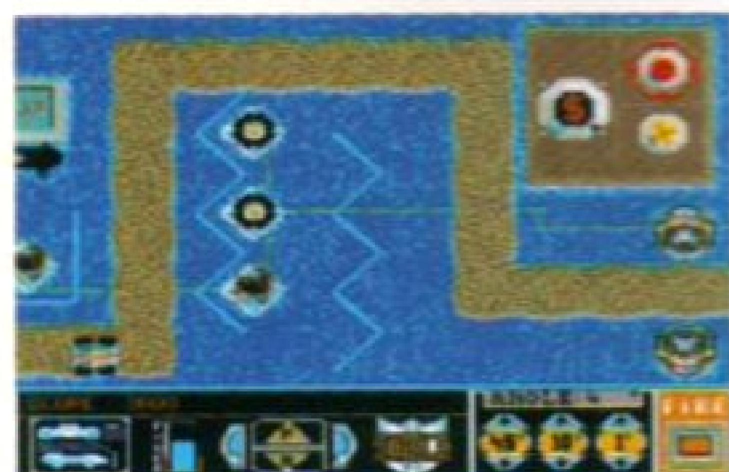
The game is quite elegant in its simplicity, subtly involving and putting into practice many of the lessons of the physical principles of light. The tank the player drives is armed with a gun to shoot the fireballs. This gun can be rotated by a degree at a time or through angles of 10 or 45 degrees. The fireballs can be bounced off reflective walls to reach the target, but all targets must be hit from long range because the tank can only travel down the road and because the defences 'zap' the tank if it gets too close.



The game is at the centre of *Light Force*. The player must manoeuvre the tank (bottom left) around the base, destroying the defences with fireballs. Icons control the angle of the gun.

The game is played, in the manner of most computer games, as a series of levels which must be negotiated in turn. Progress is rewarded not only by movement to newer and more exotic levels, not only by the amassing of an ever-greater number of points, but also by the ability to use ancillary ships in addition to the tank and by promotion to a higher rank of skill and competence.

The ancillary ships can be of several kinds to negotiate different kinds of on-screen terrain, but the most important thing about them is the way they are armed. An early promotion, for instance, bears the rank 'Mirror Master'. The player can now use an ancillary ship carrying a mirror, from which fireballs fired by the tank can be reflected towards their target. Not only does this give the game more variety, it also reinforces the lessons of reflection that the game is trying to teach.



The idea of bouncing shots from surfaces is taken to extremes, here, by a series of angled mirrors.

With progress through the levels or correct answers to the tests, the player is rewarded by a choice of extra ships. The lower of these two is a mirror ship, used to deflect shots around corners.

Conclusion

One of the basic principles of all good educational software should be to entertain first, to grab the attention of the child or young person, and then to slip the learning in as discreetly as possible. Seldom is this done as well as by *Light Force*. The game is highly entertaining and enjoyable and the lessons are well integrated, while remaining clearly educational and practical.

It's rare, too, to find an educational program which is aimed at older children and succeeds: rarer still to find one that could be used happily in schools at this advanced level, as well as at home. The game was written by degree students with some knowledge of teaching techniques – and it shows. An excellent package and highly recommended.

LIGHT FORCE
All Amigas ■ £23.99
■ TSA/Marcam 081 941 6117

The second of this month's Down-Under Duo deals with complex mathematics in a very Australian way. **DAMIEN NOONAN** investigates.



BOOMERAID

G'day, mate! Step back, now, a couple of years into the dim but not-so-distant past, to a time when a film called *Crocodile Dundee* starring a certain Paul Hogan did more to make being Australian cool than a whole troop of smooth-talking Clive Jameses and smooth-looking Jason Donovans ever could.

Even though the current ideal of Australia may be a small, blonde woman who thinks she's the next Madonna, the Aussie programmers at Lemmingsoft hark back to the good old days when men were men, crocodiles were victims and the Esky was always full of tinnies. The hero of *Boomeraid* is a tough, stocky Paul Hogan type with the black hat and the big knife, but he is armed also with the most traditional of Aussie weapons, the boomerang.

And this is where the story really starts. Like *Light Force*, *Boomeraid* is essentially a game of the kind best calculated to appeal to the children of the video age. Alongside the game there are tutorials and marked, multiple-choice tests: and again, reading and learning is encouraged by the fact that good results in the test will aid progress in the game.

Come Back!

So why boomerangs, for goodness' sake? Well, the idea is that the path of a boomerang can be described on a computer screen by a graph. In order to throw the boomerang correctly, the player must be able to manipulate the graph that represents the flight path with some skill. Graphs are an important part of the study of mathematics, as are the algebraic functions, the formulae to place x and y Cartesian co-ordinates that describe them.

The scenario for the game is that an inner-city park in a major city has become the preserve of murderers, rapists, bikers, flashers and other perverse deviants. In an effort to wipe out the problem of crime once and for all, the city authorities have put up a large electric fence around the park and sent our hero with the boomerangs in to sort them out.

Initially the hero is armed only with spears. Since these have a simple straight-line trajectory, the graphs that represent their flight paths are simple straight lines too. Each line can be tilted or moved up, down and sideways to define a flight path from the hero's hand to the target.

As each parkful of baddies is cleared, the hero undergoes an increase in Brainpower which allows him to use a more sophisticated weapon on the next round. Moving up to a proper boomerang, for instance, the flight path becomes sophisticated enough to bend round corners but the graph is a more complex parabola, so the mathematical knowledge being tested is a stage more complex too.

Happy Returns

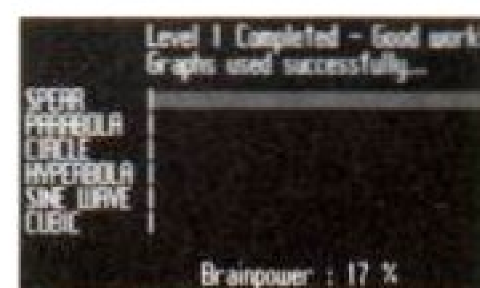
The system of rewards and incentives in *Boomeraid* is quite comprehensive. Naturally success at the less intellectual task of playing the game is rewarded by progress through the levels and the ability to use more powerful boomerang weapons, but also, when the hero eventually succumbs to the attacks of the hoodlums, a check on how many types of graph were used successfully is displayed along with a certificate of general hardness, starting out at 'Dingo Bait' if you die on the first level.

The reward stimulus is, of course, carried on into the tutorials and the exercises. The tests take the form of a graph display (called 'Mathbench'), beneath which is shown an equation which describes the line in terms of Cartesian co-ordinates. You are set the task of making the line on the graph pass through a certain point or create a certain shape: to achieve this, you must adjust the numbers in the equation that describes the line. As you do so, the line shifts on screen to represent the correct plot. When you are happy with it you bang the 'Mark' button and the program says if your effort was right or wrong.

The test progresses through the increasingly more difficult subjects of the tutorial, but you can give up at any stage. Good progress in the test is rewarded (once again) with a boost forwards in the game: you are given a code to enter which increases your Brainpower, allowing you to use the more sophisticated boomerangs in the game and so score more of those valuable points.

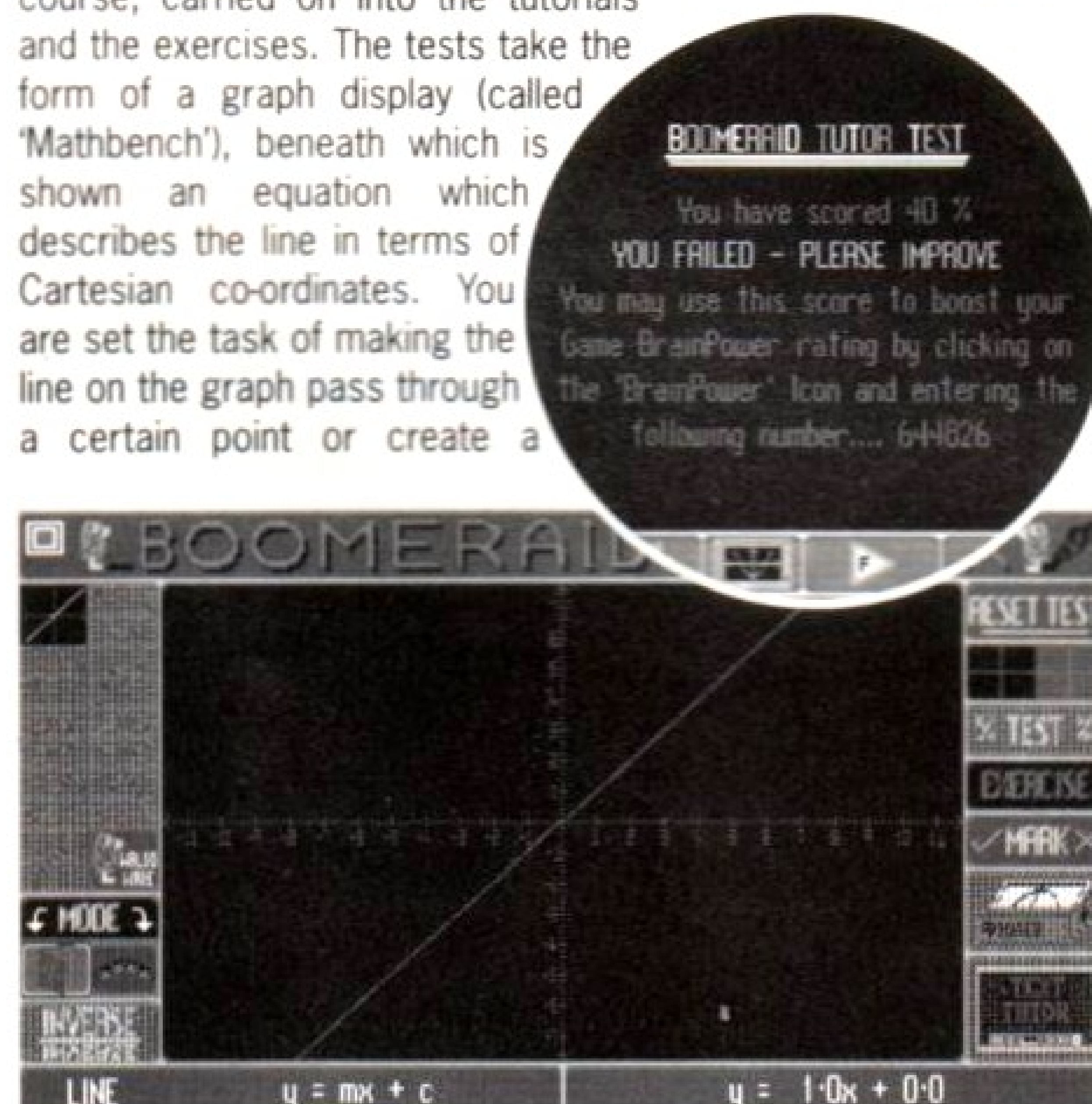


Our hero wanders the park in search of baddies to throw his boomerang at. Icons top right show which graphs he can use.



At the end of each level a bar graph shows how well the player has used the different kinds of graph available.

BELOW: Even a slightly sub-standard effort at the test is rewarded with a degree of progress in the game.



The tutor is a first step in the serious part of the program, guiding you through various graphs by asking you to move the blue line to correspond with the read line. Easy!

Conclusion

Boomeraid is an earlier effort than *Light Force* by the same programmers and in a few little ways it shows. The whole thing does not seem to hang together with quite the same tightness, the test exercises are just slightly less clearly presented and the game is perhaps a little less natural in its integration of the teaching principles. But these are really quite minor gripes. On the whole it is another clever package, wittily combining an enjoyable game of the kind that may appeal to young people whose educations are more biased to TV and arcades than to textbooks with a good, solid grounding in the topic under discussion. This is as much fun as algebra is ever going to be!

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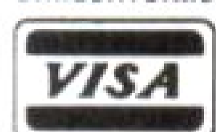
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REVIEW

Freeze Frame

After a long delay, Marcam's star performer FrameGrabber digitizing system is available. This black magic box of hidden delights is scrutinized by **PAT McDONALD**.

First, a confession. The FrameGrabber, created by Progressive Peripherals and Software in the States, was reviewed in Amiga Format Issue 7. But, although the hardware is much the same, the software which runs it has been extensively updated and supplies of the hardware have been limited, so much so that a new review was really the best course to take...

For those not in the know this is a real-time digitiser, which means that you don't need a still image to grab – you can capture stills from moving video at the touch of a key.

How it Works

You don't get everything you need to use the product in the box: a standard Amiga printer cable is also needed to connect up the gadget. Attaching it is a bit fiddly, because you need to fit the supplied power source, plug a cable from your computer's video output to the unit, the printer cable to the parellel port, and finally another cable from the FrameGrabber to your monitor.

Never mind. Once it's all connected, you run the supplied software. You will need at least 1 Meg of memory, although 2 Meg is recommended if you really want to get the best out of the it.

You can flip between looking at the video picture going into the grabber and your Amiga display, which is what the strange arrangement of cables is for. You see a moving image on the screen, and after playing around with the intensity and colour saturation controls on the front of the box to get the best image, just press the grab button and hey presto the picture is held.

A few seconds' wait is necessary, because although the grabber will snatch any image instantly, it takes a while to download the information into your Amiga and then the software has to do lots of clever tricks to give it the best look possible.

Once it's there, you can have some real fun with it. The enhancements to the software mean that you can now save pictures as 24-bit files or other protocols, such as Newtek's 21-bit image format, RAW format (which is most useful for programmers who want to mess about with the graphics) or standard IFF ILBM files. Also supported are IMG8, or the old-style 12-bit which is used by the old software, or quite a few others. File compatibility is no problem at all with this system.

Speedwise it's a bit cumbersome, but there is a 68020 version of the program included on the disk, just for all those lucky people who have accelerator cards.

Verdict

It's expensive, and yet very desirable. Quality wise it's really impressive in any mode. Definitely not aimed at the hobbyist or home user, it's a professional product that really does solve the problems inherent in capturing video information. If you can afford it and need high quality grabs it is worth getting hold of.

Frame Grabber V2.0
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MOVIES TOO

One of the best features about Frame Grabber V1.0 was the animation system. This let you build up a sequence of frames at your own speed, and adjust the playback and looping. This feature is still in there, although it's not as speedy as *Vidi-Amiga* (you wouldn't really expect it to be, because *Vidi-Amiga* is black and white only). You import such animations into *Deluxe Paint III* for final retouching, but you'll need a lot of memory to get hi-res, colourful animations.

It's worthwhile mentioning the screen resolutions possible. For black-and-white usage these range from 320-by-200 up to 640-by-400, including overscan at 384-by-240. HAM mode (that's the 4096 colour mode) can handle 320-by-200, 384-by-240 overscan or 320-by-400 interlace. If you want 640-by-400 high resolution, you'll have to make do with 16 colours. Translation: although the Frame Grabber can grab at 640 by 400 resolution in 16.7 million colours (24-bit format), you won't be able to appreciate such a high resolution while using just a standard Amiga, you'll need additional hardware.

Mind you the hardware is becoming available to let Amigas manipulate and display such images. Check out the Graphics pages for more information...

ABOVE: The Marcam Frame Grabber looks very ordinary, but can capture perfect images from video recorders (RIGHT) and also from video camera (BELOW RIGHT). The camera used was the Vicon VC285, fitted with a super macro lens – the original subject was a fantasy figure one inch tall! The camera is available from Rombo (0506 414631) for £649





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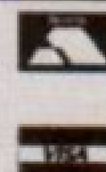
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Splitting Image

Capturing the everyday world with yet another black box – **PAT McDONALD** judges Rombo's latest gadget to make full-colour video digitising easier.

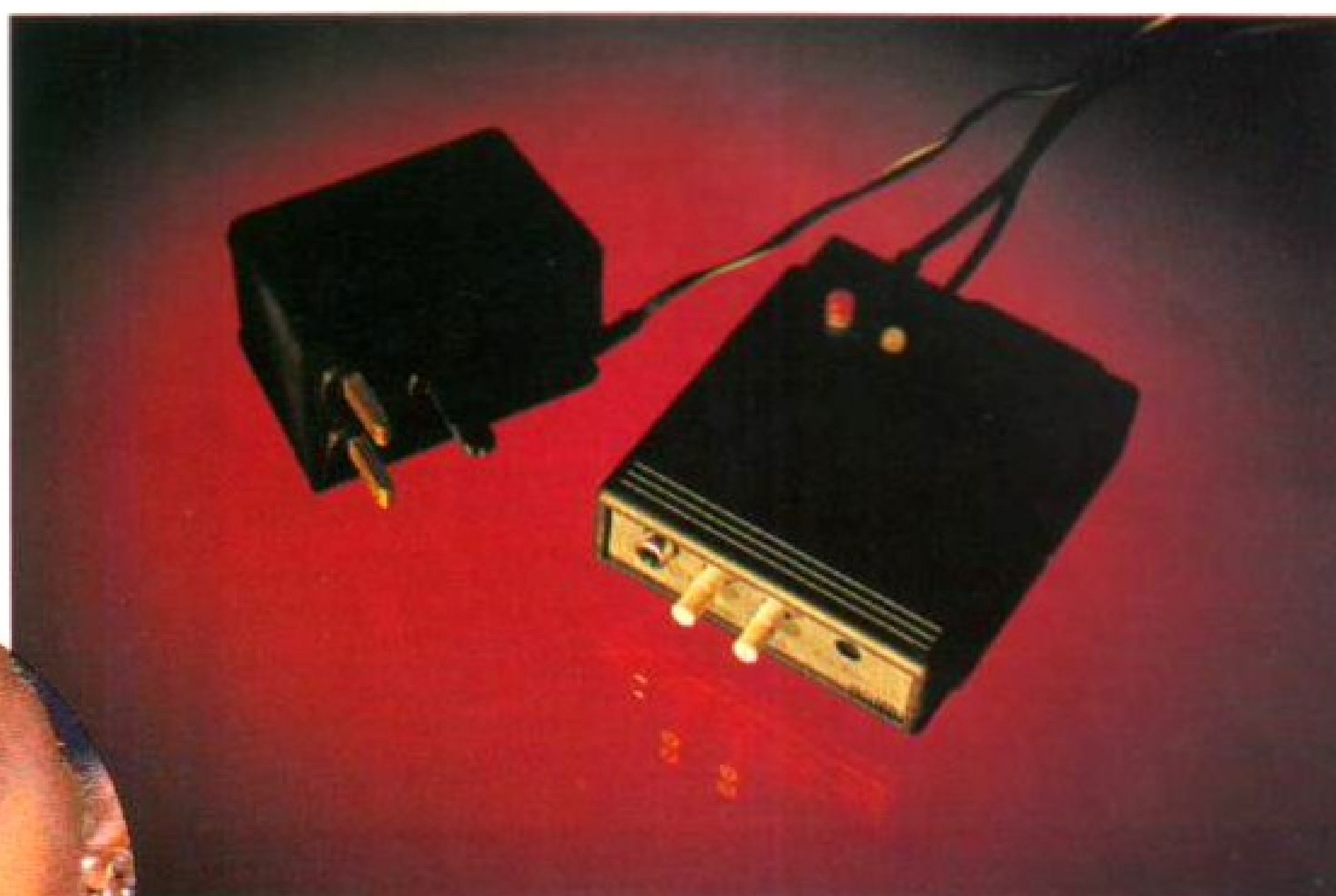
Software reviewers are always wittering on that "it's simplicity itself to read video images into your computer with a video digitiser". Not from the digitiser's point of view it isn't, mate.

So far, there are two different types of digitiser. One is the single signal type like Vidi-Amiga, Videon and DigiView. This is fine for taking video images in one colour: black-and-white. With the right software (which is an optional extra for Vidi-Amiga – it's called *Vidi-Chrome*) and a set of blue, red and green filters, you can use a black and white camera to read in the different colours, one at a time, and produce a colour picture. Alternatively, you can splash out £500-£600 to get hold of Marcam's FrameGrabber or Superpic to read in colour signals.

The theory of using cheap digitisers for colour images may sound simple, but actually doing it is a time-consuming process which relies on hit-and-miss to a large extent. The problem is that there isn't a standard method of transmitting colour composite signals, which means that with all the different kinds of video cameras and recorders, you need some impressive hardware to sort out the different red, green and blue signals for decoding into pixels to display on your computer.

RIGHT: The Vidi-RGB hardware is just a small black box.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Connect to loadsa different types of video kit with the Features Connector, the full powers of which are described in 'Wait, There's More' below.



Rombo's Answer

There is a solution: use a colour video camera, instead of a black-and-white one. The tricky bit is that unless you want to splash out on a super expensive frame grabber, then you're stuck, especially if you don't want to sell your aforementioned cheap digitiser.

Rombo's black box (the Vidi-RGB) fits inbetween the video signal and your digitiser. It replaces using those silly filters by selectively sending red, green or blue parts of the whole video signal. That takes a few seconds, so you can only use it with a colour video camera or a video recorder with an impressively clear freeze frame.



It works best with Vidi-Amiga plus *Vidi-Chrome* – V1.10 or later. Just select Grab HAM from the menu and it will tell the splitter to send down all the colour information separately. You can still grab red, green and blue signals one at a time (to get the best grab) but you don't use anything but the mouse. Other digitisers will work with Vidi-RGB, but you have to press a button on Vidi-RGB to select which colour to send. An LED on the top tells you which signal is presently being transmitted – red for red, green for green, and yellow for blue. Blue LEDs are not exactly common.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE

Apart from using standard digitisers with colour cameras instead of coloured filters, Vidi-RGB has other uses. Rombo cleverly put an extra socket on the beastie, called the feature connector. This is a bog-standard 25 pin DIN connector (the same shape as for RS232C) but it's quite interesting... honest!

If you have a cable made up for you (which Rombo will do) then you can connect the Vidi-RGB to a lot of different standard video equipment. You're not limited to composite video: S-VHS or RGB can be input into the box. Plus you can connect a monitor to it to view the picture before it enters your digitiser.

For the dedicated video techies, here's a full list of the connectors. Mainly because I'm sure you'll be able to think of lots more uses for it than I will: 1) S Lum Inp 2) S Chrm Inp 3) S Gnd 4) Decoded Red Out 5) Decoded Green Out 6) Decoded Blue Out 7) RGB Gnd 8) SYNC* Out (Buffered TTL Comp) 9) Video Inp 10) Video Out 11) Burst* Out 12) Subcarrier Clock 13) 9V DC @ 100 mA 14) Gnd 15) S Inp Select 16) Red Inp 17) Green Inp 18) Blue Inp 19) Gnd 20) Sync* Inp 21) External Inp Select 22) Gnd 23) Sync (compliment of pin 9) 24) Gnd 25) Regulated 5VDC (50mA max). Phew!

Verdict

On its own, the RGB splitter can do quite a lot for video engineers who want to mix different signal types. With a colour video camera – Rombo sell the Vicon VL285L for £649 – and any half-way decent digitiser, you need never use tacky plastic filters again. It's in a class of its own as far as peripherals go, because nothing else will do the job for the price. Serious about digitising for as little outlay as possible? Give this a look.

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MILESTONE	AMG103	Computer version of Miles Bournes.
SPACE GAMES	AMG106	Cosmoroids (like asteroids) and Gravity Wars highlight this disk full of games.
PACKMAN'87	AMG108	Better than the original. Great graphics, sound, and options.
APPLICATIONS 1	AMG112	Includes label maker, grocery list maker and Amigazer, a disk cataloger/viewer for stars (like Planetarium).
GRAPHICS 2	AMG113	Great programs for desktop publishing and video - allows you to run AmigaDOS commands or programs for Icon.
BLACKJACK	AMG114	Allows pair-splitting, double-down, etc. Bandit- play the slot machines.
BULLRUN	AMG115	Civil War strategy game disk also includes a small database, Reminder, Grocery Construction Set, Will Kit, and LabelMaker programs.
VIRUS KILLER	AMG116	VirusX stops viruses dead in their tracks.
DPSLIDE I	AMG117	Another in the great series of slide shows with great artwork.
DOMINOES	AMG118	Dominoes game with impressive graphics. Also Tic-Tac-Toe, Drawing and Molecules.
ANIMATIONS 3	AMG119	More great animations.
BOULDER DASH	AMG120	Very popular game wiht great graphics. This disk is full-it has Othello, Life3 and many useful utilities.
MAIL MANAGER	AMG121	For people who need a mail list manager to store names and addresses of friends, clients, members, etc.
BASIC GRABBAG 2	AMG127	Around 25 programs of various types.
GAMES 3	AMG128	More great games including Vegas Slot Machine, Pegboard and Reversi.
BUSINESS PROGRAMS 1	AMG129	Programs include an address book, amortization program, talking mail manager, label printer and more. Label printer is great for making return labels in large quantities.
AMOEBA INVADERS	AMG130	This fantastic game plays just like th original arcade classic, but with enhanced color and digitized sound.
FUTURE SOUND DEMO	AMG131	Another great digitized sound demo, includes the wicked witch of Oz.
BASIC GRABBAG 1	AMG132	Almost 60 programs written in Basic. Includes games, utilities and educational programs.
AMIGA BASIC PROGRAMS	AMG133	Over 50 games, utilities, applications, entertainment and finance.
CALENDAR	AMG134	A Very good personal calendar for birthdays, holidays, meetings, bills, etc.
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SINKING ISLAND II	AMG 137	The adventure begins. Text/graphics game with 4 map scenes, underground chambers and much more. Two drives recommended. 92 disks, AMG 137 A and B)
MUSIC I	AMG138	Ten superb selections. You won't believe that digitzed sound is coming from your Amiga.
BATTLESHIP	AMG139	A version of the old favorite. Play against the computer.
NORMAN ROCKWELL	AMG140	17 beautifully digitized Rockwell paintings.
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BUSINESS I	AMG148	VC Spreadsheet, HP-10C calculator, and several diversions for when the boss isn't looking.
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SINKING ISLAND	AMG150	Return to Sinking Island is an excellent adventure game.
POTPOURRI X	AMG151	A TRON-like gmae. Also mercenary simulation game is included. Great graphics!!
TUTORIAL DISK 1	AMG154	More of the best Amiga information.
TUTORIAL DISK 2	AMG155	Full of info and programmers and users.
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AIRWAR	AMG158	Great 3-D graphics enable you to experience this war version of Flight Simulator.
STAR TREK: THE GAME	AMG159	(2 disks) A brilliant masterpiece; one of the best Amiga programs we have. Extraordinary digitized sound and graphics lead you to believe that this is the real thing. Complete your 5-year mission aboard the USS Enterprise. A must for Trekkies! (1 MEG Amiga/w 2 drives min.)
Q.E.D.	AMG160	Excellent text editing program for the Amiga.

BATTLEFORCE V3.02	AMG 161	Ideal for Battletech players. 1-4 players can challenge each other or play against the computer.
NIBBLER	AMG 162	For making backup copies of just copying anything.
JR COMM/W STARLIGHT	AMG 163	This is our best Amiga communications package.
MIDI	AMG 164	(3 disks) A wealth of software for MIDI musicians and were previously released in Keyboard magazine. Support for all popular synths with editor/librarians, utilities, sequences, etc. Includes variety of 'music videos' and animation sequences not available on other disks.
LAND OF CONFUSION	AMG 165	Digitized music with voice and some graphics demo! The song "Land of Confusion" is by Phil Collins.
TIFFANY	AMG 166	Digitized music with voice! Contains the song "I Think We're Alone Now" by teen pop star Tiffany.
MADONNA	AMG 167	Digitized music with voice and picture of Madonna. Contains some of Madonna's popular music!
MICHAEL JACKSON	AMG 168	Digitized music with voice. Contains popular songs by mega-artist Michael Jackson!
POP MUSIC DEMO	AMG 169	Contains some excellent synthesized Euro-pop music! Great for showing off your Amiga sound!
BOWIE DEMO	AMG 170	Contains music of David Bowie!
DELIRIOUS 1	AMG 171	(2 Disks) Remember Eddie Murphy's video "Delirious?" Well, this it! It shows a picture of the comedy king. You select a topic from the menu and you will get the digitized version (of the video)! It's great! A must see, must hear demo! Don't forget the 2nd part of this (disk B)!
DELIRIOUS 2	AMG 173	More of the Eddie Murphy Delirious! Check it out! Contains 2 disks!
NORTHSTAR DEMO	AMG 175	The disk contains a whole bunch of awesome synthesized music, graphic demo and messages! It shows some creative special effects too!
HORROR DEMOS	AMG 176	Contains 4 very different graphics and sounds demo. The first two are very gruesome! The third and fourth demos are music and graphic messages for those strange European programmer/hackers out there. It's nothing horrifying. But the first two are the best! Unbelievable animations!
DEREK AND CLIVE	AMG 177	2 disk set! This is part A. Contains digitized voices of Derek and Clive. Tells jokes for a long time.
DEREK AND CLIVE	AMG 178	The 2nd disk!
RIPPING YARNS	AMG 179	Contains lots of synthesized music! Select them by pressing the function keys. At the same time, it shows some interesting graphics effects of you moving on a 3D plane. Use your joystick to control it.
SINNERS DEMO	AMG 180	1) Sinners II Demo - Synthesized music! 2) Iron Maiden Demo - synthesized music with Iron Maiden pic! 3) Sound Machine - music 4) Digitech's Autobahn - music and game at the same time! 5) Hulkamania demo - Plays Obsession by Animation! Cool!
VIDEO EFFECTS 3D	AMG 181	3D special effects of titles and graphics. It twists, flips, rotates the titles for videos. Awesome demo in hi-res!
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INSTRUMENTS 2	AMG 188	More instruments for your workbench disk demo.
UTILITIES	AMG 189	More utilities program for your Amiga!
FAUG 26	AMG 194	Contains raytraced pictures and The Baby, a cute long movie!
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PLAY AND LEARN	AMG 219	This disk contains 3 fun games and 4 educational games. Great for kids!
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CRYPTOBURNER	AMG 223	This one contains several excellent demos (scrolling text, graphics, and music).
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MILLER LITE COMMERCIAL	AMG 238	Another nice demo from Europe. It plays slides of the Miller Lite commercial along with the music. Neat!
ACID DEMO	AMG 239	European demo of Acid Music. Plays music (excellent quality sound) and picture/ animations.
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ANIMATIONS	AMG 361	Two nice animations are on this disk. [GeoTime] A demo showing the change in time of all the time zone in the world (with map of the world). [Ripples] Nice animation demonstrating rotation around an Amiga flag.
ANIMATIONS	AMG 362	This disk contains three good animations: BoingCheckmark, Flybye, and Floyd.
ANIMATIONS	AMG 363	This disk contains two animations: OS2 and Zeus1.
ANIMAITONS	AMG 364	This disk contains three animations: DrumLick, ElGato, and Zeus2 (Improved version with sound).
ANIMATIONS	AMG 365	This disk contains four animations: 7J7, FanEngine, Harrier, and Zoom.
KLINGON PHASERS	AMG 366	This animation shows Star Trek's Klingon ships fly toward and past you. Great 3D effects!
MARS FLIGHT	AMG 367	This animation shows a spaceship fly into a Martian city. Excellent 3D effects!
GODZILLA ANIM	AMG 368	This disk contains three animations: Godzilla, Birds, and ReWind.
MIDI HOOKUPS	AMG 369	This is a short demo that shows you how to hook up your MIDI system. It was created with the Director.
GHOSTPOOL	AMG 370	2 excellent animations requiring at least 1 megabyte. [Ghostpool] Watch a game of pool played by nobody. [Stamp Collector] See Dr. Gandalf's interesting stamp collection.
FOOTBALL HELMET	AMG 371	This disk contains the two animations Dragon and Helmet (shows the Seattle Seahawks football helmet spinning around). AMG185 or animation shower is needed in order run these two animations.*These Sonix disks should autoboot, if not, use Sonix.
SONIXSCORES1	AMG372	Many songs:Amazing Grace, Annie Song, View To A Kill, Axel Foley, Clam City, Country Roads, Cuts Like A Knife, Dating Game Theme, and more!

Presenting PROTEXT 5.0

Five years to the month after Protext version 1 was launched Arnor are pleased to present version 5, an enormous leap forward in both ease of use and performance.

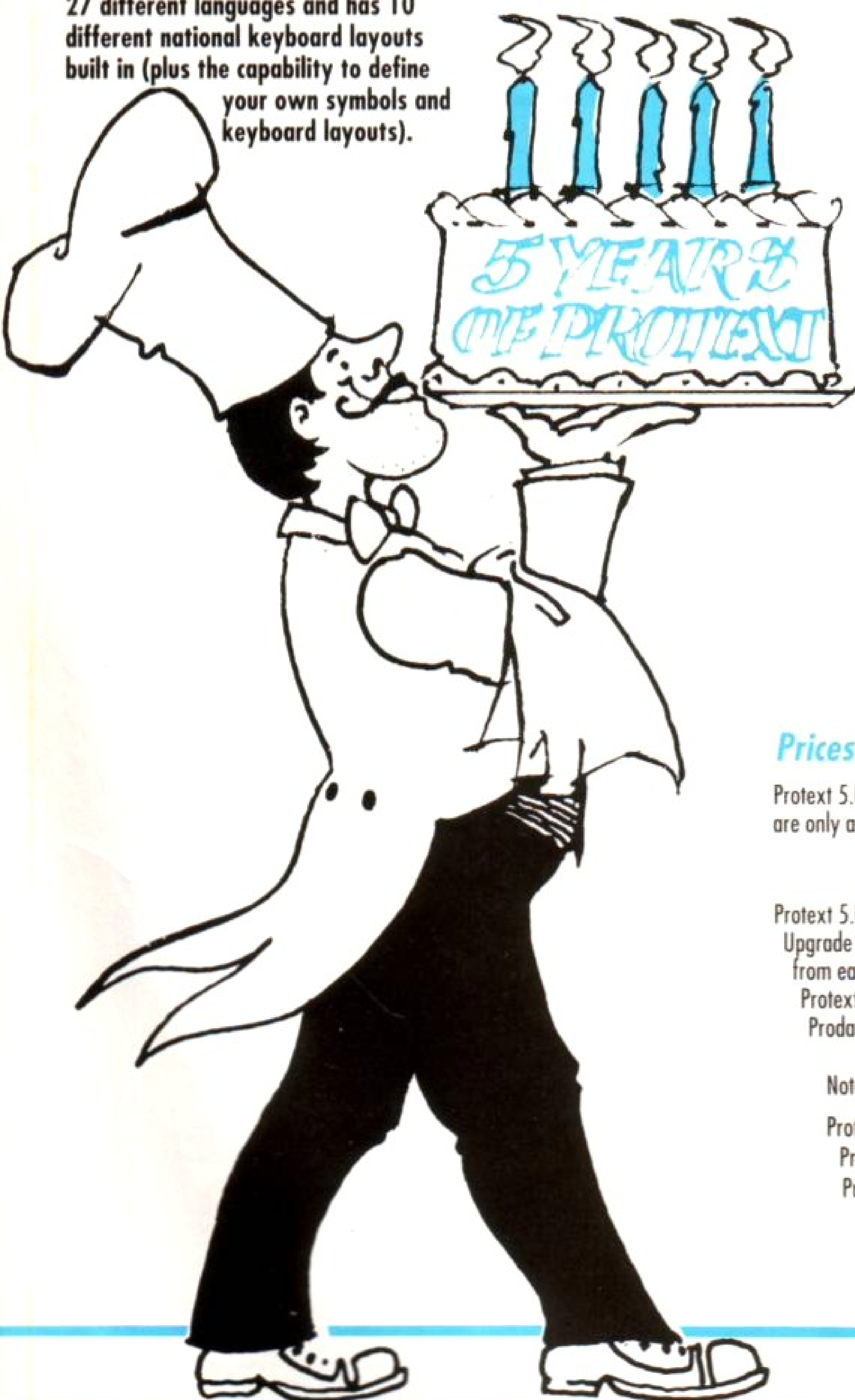
Protext 5.0 introduces a completely integrated system of pull down menus and dialogue boxes. The menus are among the many operations that may now be carried out with either the mouse or the keyboard. Protext really does give you the best of both worlds.

Protext 5.0 handles printer fonts flexibly and accurately. You can make full use of any number of proportional printer fonts, mix them freely within any line, centre them in headers, use automatically formatted footnotes. And Protext correctly formats your text as you type it, no matter how many font changes you use, showing you line and page breaks exactly as they will be printed.

Protext 5.0 is still the fastest word processor around. Even though we have made all these major improvements we have taken great care to ensure that text editing is as fast as ever. The menus work smoothly and quickly even with high resolution displays. But of course, you can use Protext's efficient set of commands and keys just as before and 5.0 remains compatible with all earlier versions from 1.0 onwards.

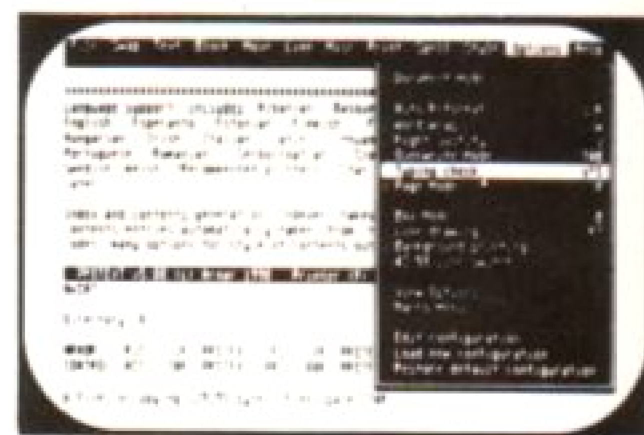
Protext 5.0 is a worthy successor to version 4, which was described as "the best word processor at any price", "the best text processor on the Amiga" and "the most powerful word processor on the Atari ST" (AUI, ST/Amiga Format, ST User).

Protext 5.0 heralds a new era of multi-lingual European software, in time for 1992 and the opening up of Eastern Europe. Protext may be used in at least 27 different languages and has 10 different national keyboard layouts built in (plus the capability to define your own symbols and keyboard layouts).



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- **Graphics mode support** on PC allows use in virtually any text or graphics mode including 132 column or 75 line VGA modes; user defined characters and on-screen bold, italics and underlining now on all versions; use of 13 different accents on any character.
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- **Index and contents** generation. Indexer takes marked words or phrases; contents entries automatically taken from titles wrapped in control codes; many options for style of contents output.
- **Spelling checker** features completely new 110,000+ word Collins dictionary with very fast phonetic lookup. Anagrams and find word pattern. Foreign language dictionaries (German, Swedish available now, others to follow).
- **Many other enhancements** including multi-line footnotes and endnotes; automatic timed save; add column or row of figures; indent tabs; find word at cursor; 40 column mode support; sentence operations; inter- paragraph space; much improved expression evaluator; self incrementing variables; Roman numerals; newspaper-style column printing; file sorting utility with special options for names and addresses; revised manual plus new tutorial guide.
- **And don't forget Protext still includes** background printing; box manipulation; macro recording; exec files; headers and footers; find and replace; mail merging; undelete; file conversion utility; configuration program; auto reformatting; on screen help; time and date; typewriter mode; line drawing; disc utilities.

Prices

Protext 5.0 may be purchased from any good computer shop or directly from Arnor. Upgrades from earlier versions are only available from Arnor and the original discs should be returned with your order.

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Protext 5.0	£149.95	£149.95	£149.95	£149.95
Upgrade from v4.2	£60	£60	£60	N/A
from earlier versions	£75	£75	£75	N/A
Protext 4.2	£99.95	£99.95	£99.95	N/A
Prodata 1.1	£79.95	£79.95	£79.95	due 1991 Q1

Notes:

Protext 5.0 requires at least 640K of memory on all machines
Protext 4.2 requires at least 512K of memory on all machines
Prodata requires 1MB of memory on the Amiga

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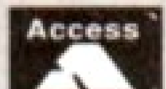
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Mathematical Music Maker

Hologramophone Research have come up with a couple of interesting ways of creating music. **MAFF EVANS** looks at Hyperchord, a mathematical composition tool.

For some years now various 'arty' people have been toying with the idea of creating music from nature. Even on the good old Commodore 64, such well-known names as Jeff Minter experimented with 'fractal music' in games. Now Hologramophone have borrowed the idea to try to produce a strange new kind of sequencer.

Instead of entering the notes you want to hear and cutting and pasting them all over the place, with *Hyperchord* you create tunes simply by dragging the pointer across a grid to create a 'riff'. That riff can be played back in a variety of ways, using different scales, tonal structures and chord progressions to provide a wholly unique piece of music. Additional effects can be carried out including changing waveforms, creating rhythms or using the 'vector play' system for expression. Unfortunately, this bears no relation to the vector system found on some of the latest synths to produce some wonderful noises.

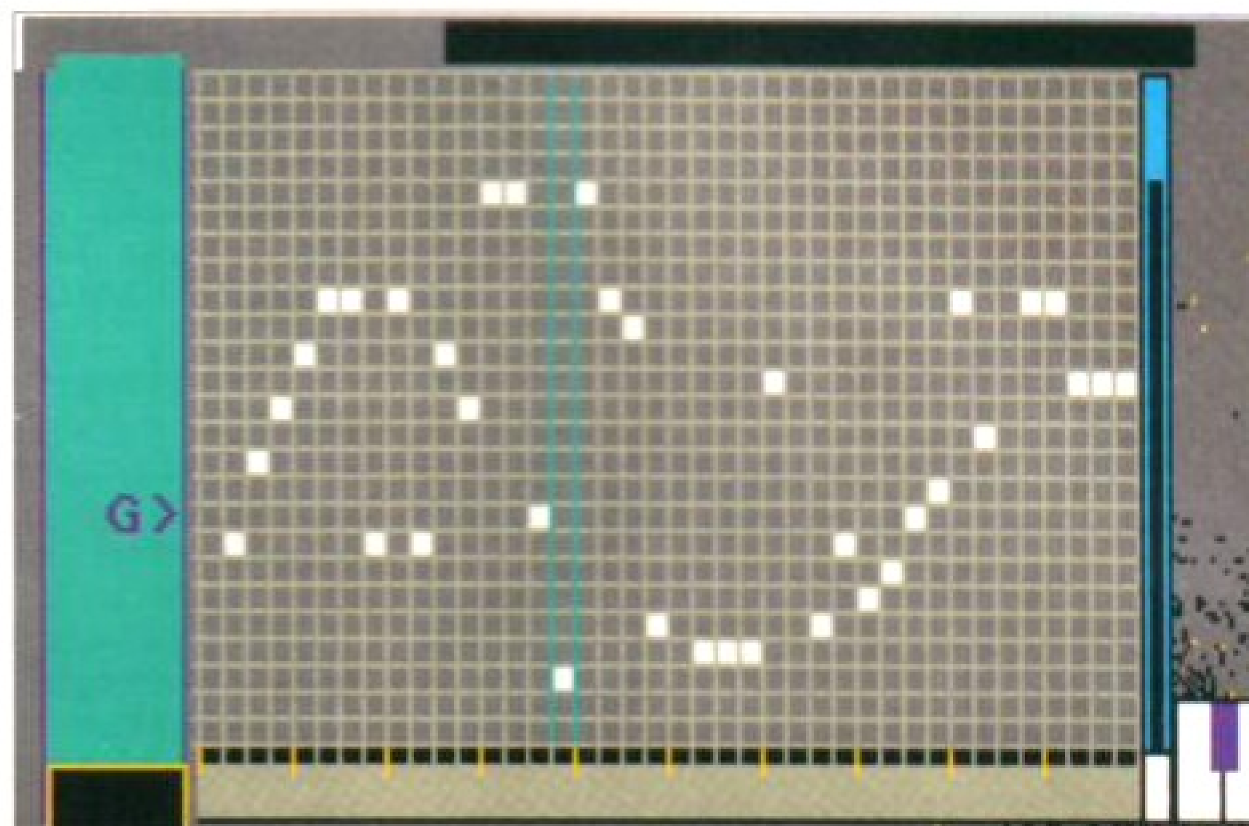
Nice Idea, Shame About The Song

The ideas behind *Hyperchord* are rather interesting – a system whereby a novice can produce rolling riffs and shuffling rhythms at the press of a button. Unfortunately, to get anything even remotely akin to a 'tune' you need to know music theory like the back of your hand. Simply drawing a few shapes on the grid and messing about with the keyboard (as the manual suggests) produces a piece of music not unlike a cat being let loose on a Bontempi organ.

If you're really into interesting new music and serious about it, then read the music press, see what new bands are appearing and listen to their stuff. It's a lot cheaper than buying a 'composition tool' that doesn't even produce music.

HYPERCHORD
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BELOW: Using this grid, you can use the mouse to 'draw' riffs and then play them via a series of tone banks and chord tables.



The Colour of Sound

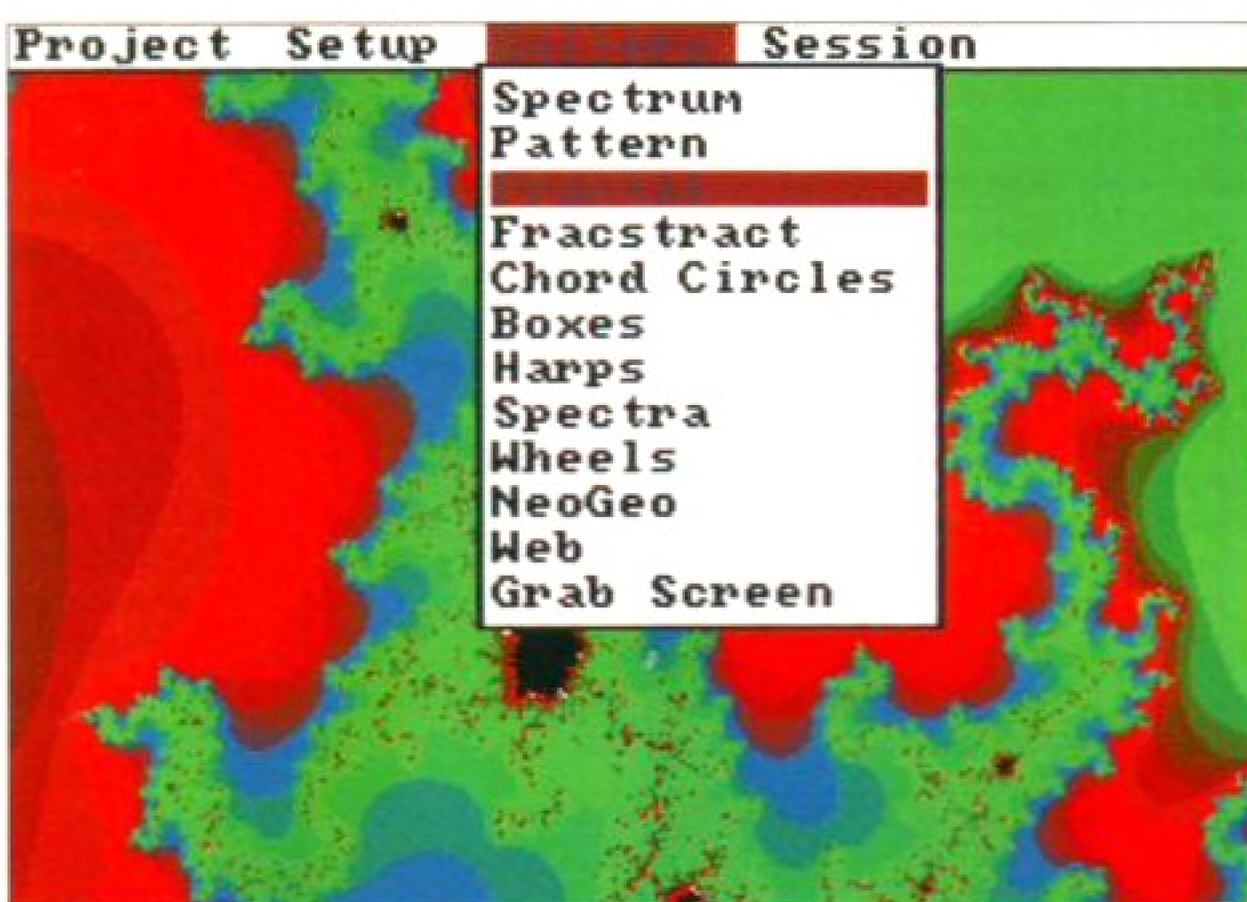
Another alternative music creator from Hologramophone, but this time you can 'play' pictures. **MAFF EVANS** sees how it works.

It's funny how things are harking back to the days of peace, love, hippies and rather dodgy substances these days, isn't it? The Stone Roses with their flares and jangly Monkees-style music, Deee Lite and their psychedelic costumes and, last but not least, Hologramophone with their very strange pictorial music creation system *Pixound*.

The idea is to create 'natural' pieces of music by using shapes, colours and patterns to create random, staccato pieces of music. The program works by loading a picture into the Amiga and displaying it on screen. A pointer is then moved around the screen (or an automatic, randomly-moving pointer can be called up) across the various areas of colour. The program then uses the amounts of red, green and blue to produce a series of shifting notes and scales, using preset tonal series and chord progressions.

Any picture can be used, as long as it is passed through a program to convert it to a form that *Pixound* can understand. So if you wish you can load a digitised picture of the Stone Roses and move the pointer around to see if their image really does convey the essence of their music!

The thinking behind the *Pixound* system is intriguing. Being able to produce music from fractals, chaos and fine art is a beautiful thought. Unfortunately, the sounds that the program produces are not as beautiful as the concept. The various tonal systems that can be called up hardly affect the music at all – and the



music sounds like a psychopath in control of a Stylophone with the batteries going flat. *Pixound* is a freak-out hippy program that will only make any real sense if you're extremely wasted – which I would not recommend to anyone at all.

PIXOUND
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ABOVE: One of the screens in the *Pixound* Gallery that you can 'play'. This one is a fractal curve.

RIGHT: Using the conversion program, you can load up your own choice of IFF pictures and use them to create sound.



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Work bench

Our very own Techie expert **PAT MCDONALD** rhymes and reasons his way through four pages of hints and tips.

MESSING ABOUT

Here's a tip for people who want to mess about a bit with the Startup-sequence. First, make a back-up copy of Workbench that you can safely play around with, and then follow these steps:

1) Copy a drawer icon, calling the copy of the drawer S.
2) Open the drawer and drag an icon into it (for example, the *Notepad* icon). Rename the icon 'Startup-sequence'.
3) Click once on the newly-named icon, then select Info from the Workbench menu at the top of the screen. Enter the line :c/ed in the 'Default tool' box, and then click on save to save the new setting.
4) Double-click on the Startup-sequence icon, and you can edit it to your heart's content.

Iain S Barclay
Fareham

For those readers who don't know how to use Ed to edit text files, here's a quick run-down on the commands. Use the cursor keys to move the cursor around the text. Both backspace and DEL work as normal. To insert a blank line, type CTRL-A. If you resize the screen, CTRL-V will redraw the display as best it can inside the window. CTRL-B deletes the line that the cursor is on. Finally, use ESC-X to save the file and quit. Have fun learning how the Startup-sequence works! And only ever change a copy of your Workbench disk, never the original.



MESSING ABOUT: Yes, the Startup-sequence, all ready for some severe exploration and exploitation.

LASER OK

To take advantage of the excellent output of Compugraphic fonts used with *Pagesetter II* I have recently upgraded my 24-pin Panasonic printer to a Hewlett Packard DeskJet Plus. This means I can print the Compugraphic fonts to a resolution of 300 dots per inch instead of 180 dpi.

Using the HP_DeskJet driver in Preferences I soon discovered that, although the first graphic dump after switching on was correctly positioned at the top of the page, all subsequent printouts were half an inch lower as the printer fed this amount of paper just prior to printing.

I tried phoning Hewlett Packard and Hi-Voltage. I tried using the PD printer driver generator program by Jorgen Thomson. Eventually I realized that the problem lay with the perforation skip commands embedded in the Preferences driver. Using *Filezap* I managed to edit the driver so that it runs off the perforation skip so that every graphic printout starts in the same place on the page.

If any readers have an Amiga driving an HP DeskJet and would like a copy of the modified driver I would be pleased to send them a copy on receipt of a disk and return postage.

John Farrar
Elm Cottage
2 Marsh Lane, Hayle
Cornwall TR27 4PS

What a nice gent you are.

ONE-KEY UNDERLINE

Here's a tip for *Protext* users. There is a way of underlining words using only single keystrokes – if you don't count pressing the Alt key. It's not quite perfect, but it works!

First, you must enter Command mode. Type MACRO [Return]. Type Au at the requester for the Macro letters and when the string requester appears after another [Return], type:

```
^758^^536^u^759^^754^^536^
u [Return].
```

To underline your word, place the cursor at the end of it, press the [Alt] key and then [U]. After a brief flicker, the word will be underlined and the cursor will appear at the beginning of the next word. If it's the last word in a sentence, leave a space before the full stop, underline the word and then delete the space.

Also does anyone know of a really good printer driver for the Star LC24-10? The standard Epson-Q supports Italic, Bold and Underline, but the resolution is only half that which is possible. With *Protext* I don't have any problems (because drivers are built in) but *Transcript* shows there are features which are untapped within my printer.

W Rudrum
London

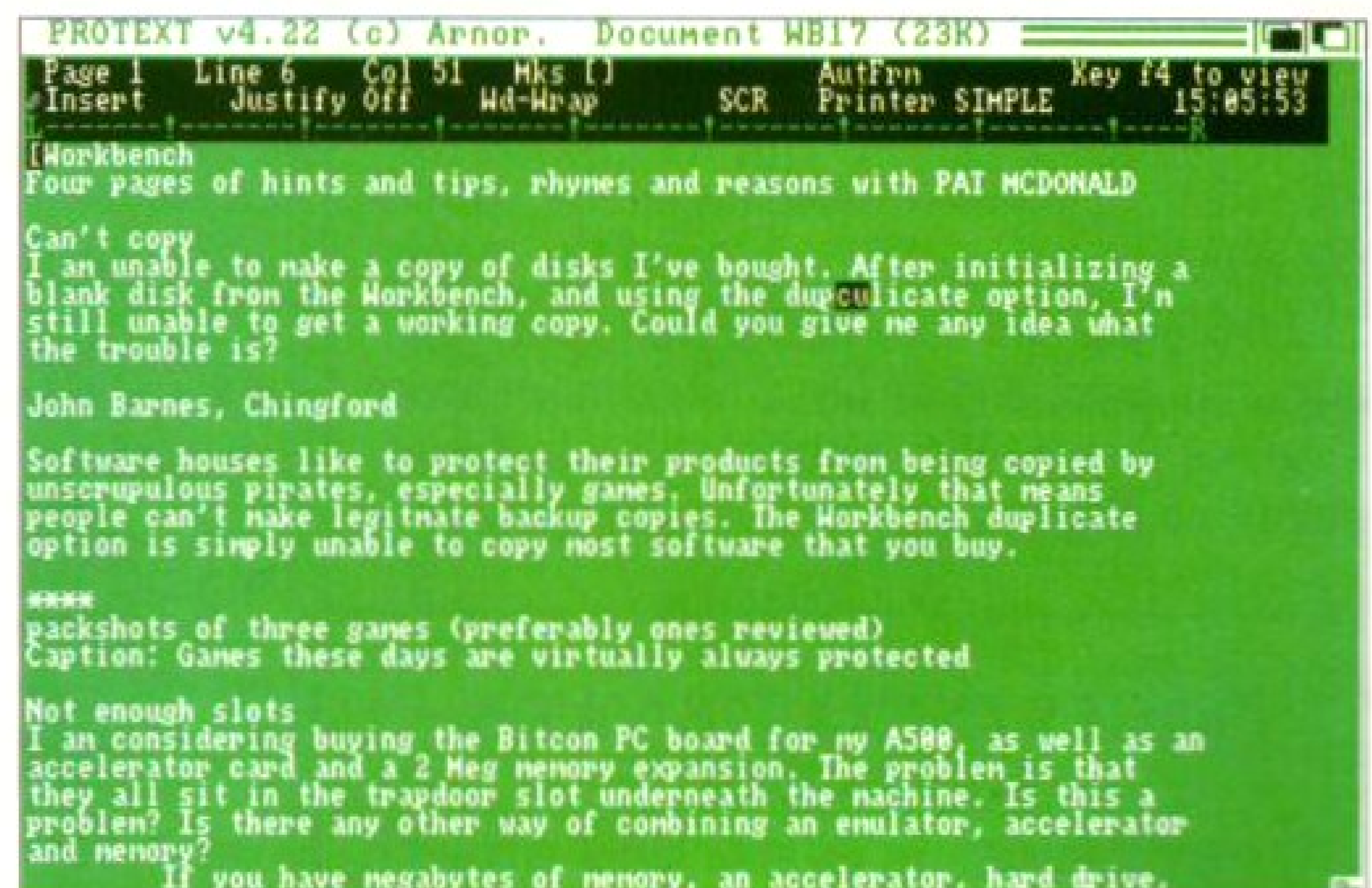
Thanks very much for the tip. If anyone out there knows of any non-standard printer drivers, please drop a note in to Workbench, whether they're for the LC24-10 or any other printer: lots of people ask for weird and wonderful printer drivers.

SHORT AND SWEET

1) Which is the best colour video digitizer available for about £100?
2) What exactly is SCART?
3) Is there any way I can pull the sound from a video recorder, and either record it on a MIDI system or directly into my Amiga?

Mark Lambourne
Bicester

1) Two options exist, Rombo's Vidi-Amiga at £99.95 or Newtek's DigiView Gold 4 at about £120. Both have their good and bad points: Vidi Amiga makes use of the external drive socket for power but digitizes faster: DigiView Gold software has more features, but it is slower. To get the most out of Vidi-Amiga for colour you will need Vidi-Chrome, *which costs an extra £19.95.*
2) SCART is a standard plug for video communication, often found on video equipment like monitors.



ONE-KEY UNDERLINE: It's amazing just what is possible with only one finger, an A500 and *Protext*.

In theory, by using SCART connectors you can connect video players (cameras, videos etc) to monitors without having to use special leads.

3) You can record sound from any source into an Amiga by using a sound sampler. Be warned that to have quality recording you need lots of memory for just a few seconds of sound. Sound-to-MIDI analysing software for samplers has yet to appear: but in theory it is perfectly possible.

HUNGRY FOR WAR

Could you please recommend some Second World War or even later-period wargames – they seem to be a bit thin on the ground. Are the PD *RIM* database and *Visicalc* spreadsheet programs any good? Is a second disk drive easy to install and use? Is it possible to copy tools and drawers to the RAM disk using the CLI? How do I use *IconEd* on the 1.3 Extras disk to access tool icons, like the SAY icon?

Kev Mayne
Liskeard

Three wargames to look out for are Red Lightning *from SSI (Warsaw Pact versus Nato),* Vulcan *from CCS (Tunisian campaign in 1943) and* Fire Brigade *by Panther/Mindscape (Eastern Front, 1943). I regret I can't offer any opinion on those two PD products: but with PD the idea is they're free anyway, so get them and see for yourself. Installing a second disk drive is just a question of plugging it in. Using it is just as easy (any disks put in it appear on Workbench, just like the internal drive). However, it does take up extra memory, which can be a drawback on half Meg systems – some programs like to have as much memory available as possible.*

From the CLI, two commands are used to shift tools and files about. COPY, or COPY ALL, will make copies in any device (the RAM disk is known as RAM:). The MAKEDIR command is used to keep track of different drawers being copied. Try the following, and then experiment:

MAKEDIR RAM:c
COPY ALL FROM df0:c to RAM
LIST RAM:
LIST RAM:c

You have to specify the correct path when entering a name for editing – the disk name, the drawer and the filename. So, the correct path for the Say icon is: Workbench1.3:Utilities/Say. Just putting in Say isn't enough for your computer to work out where the icon is.

NO SOFT SUPPORT

I have just bought a Fat Trapper 4 Meg memory upgrade from Bytes and Pieces. It's fitted and tested, no problems, but...

None of my sound sampling programs make much use of this available memory. The most I can sample is 2.1 Meg using MasterSound. Not too bad, but MasterSound doesn't have the features of *Digisoft* – this allows you to adjust the sound as you hear it, but only uses 900K.

I contacted some of the software people and they said that the software was not written for that amount of RAM. Why not? Upgrading the Amiga with more RAM is the trend these days. Do you know of any good sound samplers which make use of all the added RAM?

T Catt
St Leonards-on-sea

No. Does anyone else?

LIES, DAMNED LIES

I was amazed to read your reply to J Hall's letter in *AF* 10. His statement was 'I need a hard drive that provides RAM expansion for my A1000' and you said there wasn't one.

I wish to give J Hall and all owners of the A1000 (there wouldn't have been an A500 or A2000 without it!) a tip from down under. Go get yourselves the



official Commodore A590. I did and fitted it with 2 Meg of RAM and it all runs quite happily on my A1000. Yes, I was told that there was a timing difference between the A500 and A1000. So what?

First, I tried plugging a friend's Sidecar unit into the expansion slot of an A500. Worked a treat, albeit upside down. So, I thought, if you can use A1000 peripherals on an A500, why can't you use A500 gadgets on an A1000?

ONE-DRIVE TIP

I read with interest G Morecroft's letter in *AF* 13 on single drive tips. There is an easier way to do it without all that disk swapping, albeit rather memory inefficient (of more use to owners of 1 Meg Amigas).

Basically it involves using RAM to hold any commands that need to be used from the CLI for 1.2 and 1.3 owners. Here's an example of just one command, DIR (you can omit the from and to bits if you want):

```
copy from c:dir to RAM:
assign c: RAM:
```

This copies the DIR command into the RAM disk, then instructs DOS to look for DOS commands in a logical drive known as c: (as opposed to looking for c: on the boot disk, it looks at the RAM disk).

Fine, but it creates two problems – first, the only command that the CLI will now recognize is the DIR command! Second, how to get back to normal?

You can copy as many commands as you'll need into the RAM disk (CD, COPY, LIST, INFO and TYPE are useful). They work faster – because they load from RAM – and you don't need to swap back to your boot disk either. Alternatively, you can type SYS:c/ followed by the command you want.

To get back to normal, type:

```
SYS:c/assign SYS:c
Delete RAM:#?
```

The last command empties the RAM disk, giving you the memory back.

Now, if you want your Amiga to do a bit more work, then type in instead (again, this is for CLI on 1.2 or 1.3 machines):

```
copy c:dir RAM:
path RAM: c: system:
```

This will copy the dir command into the RAM disk, but when you use a command that's not in the RAM disk, it will look for it on the boot disk and will ask you to insert it. This works by telling DOS where to look for commands – first RAM:, then c:, then the system:.

Yet another possibility! If you know that the disk you want to investigate is a bootable disk – paint packages, sound packages, but not games – and has its own c: directory full of commands, then (still for 1.2 or 1.3 CLI usage) try this:

1) Enter the CLI as normal.
2) Wait for the disk drive to stop, then insert the disk that you want.
3) Type in 'df0:c/' followed by the command you want.

Usually most disks of this sort will contain the usual DOS commands such as DIR, so to get a directory of df0: – 'df0:c/dir df0:'. If you type 'df0:c/dir df0:c' you will get a directory of the c: directory on the disk in df0:, and all the commands available. If assign is in there you could type 'df0:c/assign c: df0:c' to make DOS look for commands in the c: directory of the disk under investigation. If path is on there, 'df0:c/path df0:c RAM: c: system:' would be a catch-all option, where a disk swap would only be neccessary if the computer couldn't get the command any other way.

To get back to normal insert Workbench and again type 'df0:c/assign c: df0:c' or 'path RAM: c: System:' – don't put add on the end of this because you don't want to add a path, but declare one.

What about Shell for 1.3 users? This has a new command, resident, which does everything for you. Just type 'resident c:dir pure' and the command (in this case DIR) will be installed in memory. DOS will now search the resident list before any other paths when you type a command, and if it finds it in memory it will use it from there.

Of course you can make as many commands resident in the RAM disk as you want, subject to available memory. Typing 'resident' on its own will display which commands are currently in memory – notice that the commands resident and cd are already there, because they're loaded into memory when the disk boots up from the startup-sequence file.

To get back to normal (remember, this is all for 1.3 owners only) type 'resident dir remove' or whichever commands you've added to the RAM disk. The only reason why G Morecroft's solution works is because cd is always resident, and then only on 1.3 machines.

On a different subject, if you use the EXEC library function 'allocmem' in AmigaBasic you may notice that on calling 'freemem' a number of bytes – or even several K – disappear without trace, even if you check and double check the size value. I don't know the reason, but I have found a cure.

If you add the following before, and after, the call to freemem, then all will be well: DUMMY=FRE(-1). DUMMY can be any legal variable, but should be at least a long integer (DUMMY&) if you have a DEFINT instruction in your program, otherwise you will get a 'Type Mismatch' error.

So the section of the program would now read something like this:

```
DUMMY=FRE(-1):CALL freemem&
(Buffer&,Size&):DUMMY=FRE(-1)
```

Ian Hartnell
Sidmouth

Well, lots of tips there for single drive owners, who I am sure will be very grateful. As for the Allocmem problem, I suspect the garbage collection procedure in AmigaBasic myself. Anybody know for sure?



I tried it with instant success. The A590 has a rather long, heavy, metal tongue protruding, and this goes right under the metal shielding on the A1000 main circuit board without any modifications. The A590 then pushes into the A1000 expansion port with the mouse left in the mouse port and all that is then required is support for the A590 because it is hanging in mid-air at this stage.

The power is connected to the A590 and left on as the user manual states. This leaves the A1000 to turn on the A590 from the expansion bus, fire up the A1000 and run Kickstart. With Kickstart 1.3 booted your A590 will autoboot and autoconfigure any additional memory fitted.

I had a friend's A590, full of software, running in two minutes on my machine – boy was I a happy guy! Its been working for around a month without a glitch.

I did some tweaking – made a box to go underneath, shifted the stickers around (if you fit the A590 to an A1000, it will be back to front). I also moved the LEDs so that I could see them: it's not difficult if you can solder a bit.

One minor thing is that you do have to fit an extension cable for the second joystick port, although the mouse will just about fit – if you want to remove it, though, you do have to unplug the A590 to get to it.

A few minor notes: my A1000 is a full PAL model with just one main board, not the earlier two-board version. I also have the Insider 1 Meg RAM board with clock installed, and the A590 is happy to work with that device too, giving me 3.5 Meg of autoconfiguring RAM and an autobooting 20 Meg hard drive.

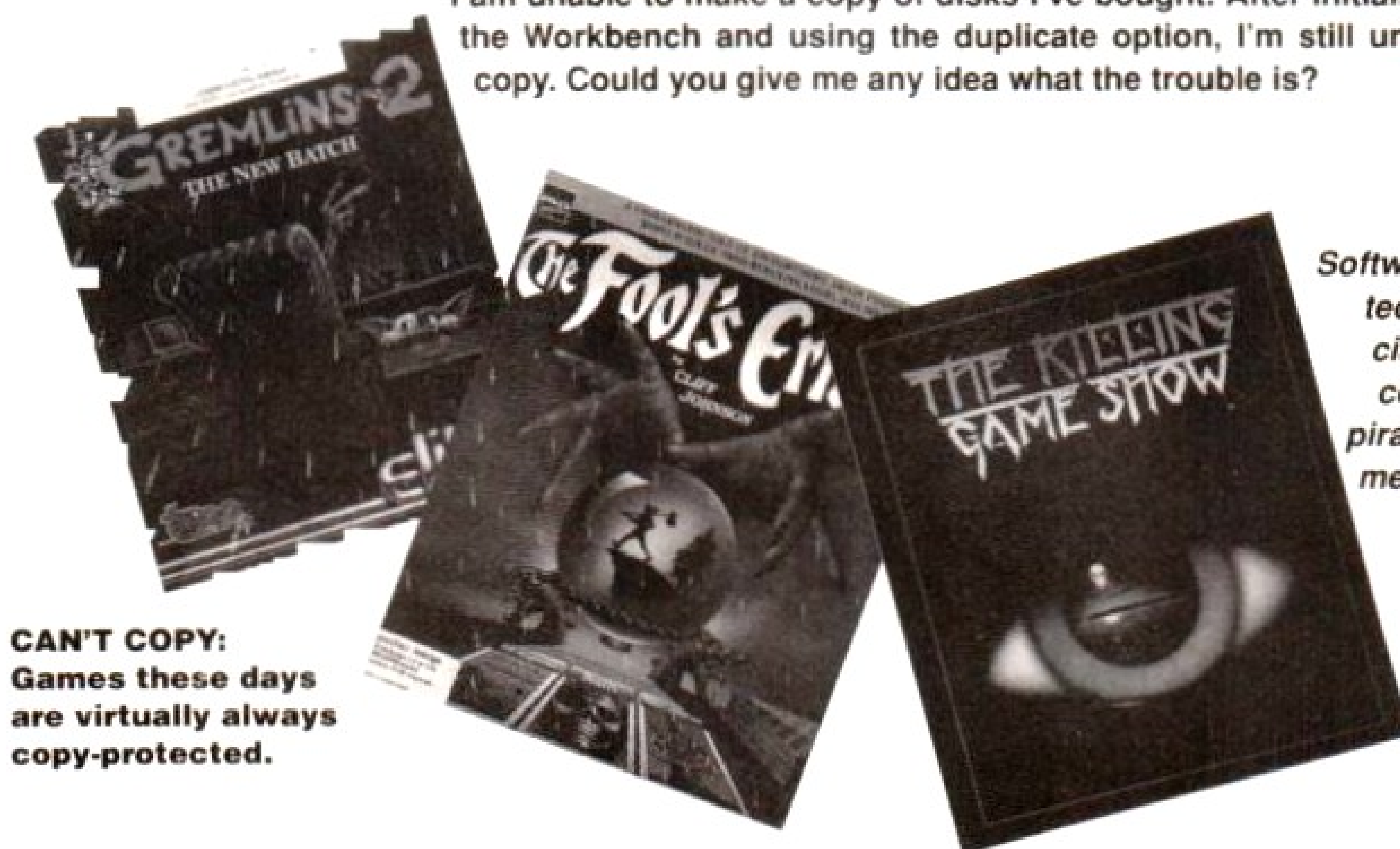
R C Shephard
Tasmania

A good job well done, mate. It's an interesting little trick.

CAN'T COPY

I am unable to make a copy of disks I've bought. After initializing a blank disk from the Workbench and using the duplicate option, I'm still unable to get a working copy. Could you give me any idea what the trouble is?

John Barnes
Chingford



CAN'T COPY: Games these days are virtually always copy-protected.

Software houses like to protect their products, especially games, from being copied by unscrupulous pirates. Unfortunately that means people can't make legitimate back-up copies. The Workbench duplicate option is simply unable to copy most software that you buy.

GREEK PHILOSOPHY

After looking at the demo on the *AF* 11 Coverdisk, I bought AMOS and am very pleased with it. After looking at the graphics commands I noticed a lack of 3D support and I'd like to ask some questions about this:

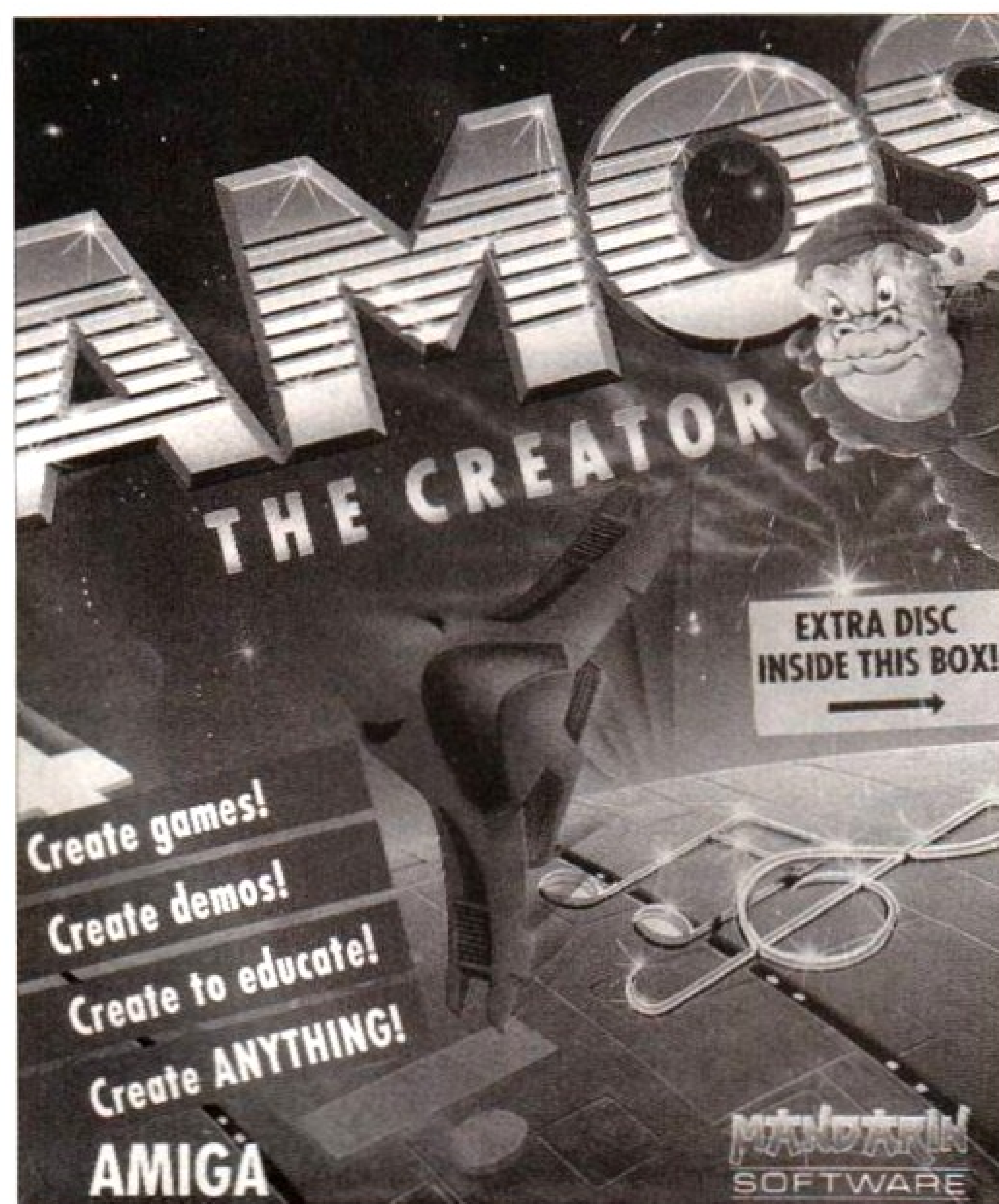
1) Is the graphics programming philosophy of a 3D isometric game (for instance *Cadaver*) really a 3D one? It mostly seems to be eye-fooling techniques with colours and distances based around a 2D world, unlike, say, the 3D of *Starglider*.
2) Can AMOS be used to program such a game?
3) If not, should I upgrade to AMOS 3D?
4) Or do you think I should use assembly language instead? I'm not that good with it yet.

Also, on the BBC Emulator – can it read BBC/Electron tapes? Does it use the Amiga's drive, or an external Beeb drive?

Iliadis Prodromos
Greece

1) Isometric games have 3D programming routines (for length, breadth and depth) but often use just two of them: games with variable height, as well as left/right/up/down, are true 3D.
2) Yes, AMOS can cope with isometric 3D, since isometric always uses the same size for graphics, whereas in games like Starglider *the distance from viewing has to be considered too. That is, in* Starglider, *when things fly away from you, they get smaller, as opposed to just flying off the screen.*
3) AMOS 3D? I couldn't say – I haven't seen it myself yet!
4) No. Develop your ideas as best as you can with AMOS – it would be silly to try to atttempt them with assembly language. When you're happy with programming techniques and want a faster, slicker program, that's when you switch to machine code.

And also, no, it can't. Sorry.



GREEK PHILOSOPHY: AMOS, 'the creator', much talked about by lots of people (mumble, mumble).

MONITOR MAYHEM

In *AF* 12 on Page 107 under the heading 'Memory and Monitors', S Lawson asked about the Phillips 8833 and 8852 monitors. In particular the question 'does the 8852 have stereo sound' was asked, to which your reply was yes, it does.

I have an 8852, so does a friend of mine, and neither of them has stereo. The response also suggested that the only difference between them is the higher resolution offered by the 8852 – this is also untrue.

The 8852 lacks a composite video input, which means that it can only be driven by a TTL or RGB signal (it can't be used with many VCRs, Teletext adaptors or video cameras). Otherwise the 8852 is fantastic, although I would recommend the 8833 as the extra versatility of composite input and stereo is worth the reduction in resolution. Plus it's cheaper.

M B Tankard
Manchester

POSSIBLE?

I have a small problem which you may be able to help me with. I recently acquired a hard disk drive made by the Seagate company. Its model number is ST-4038 and it has two edge connectors, one a 10-way and the other a 17-way, as well as power and ground connections.

The question is, is there any way on earth to use this drive with my A500, regardless of cost and

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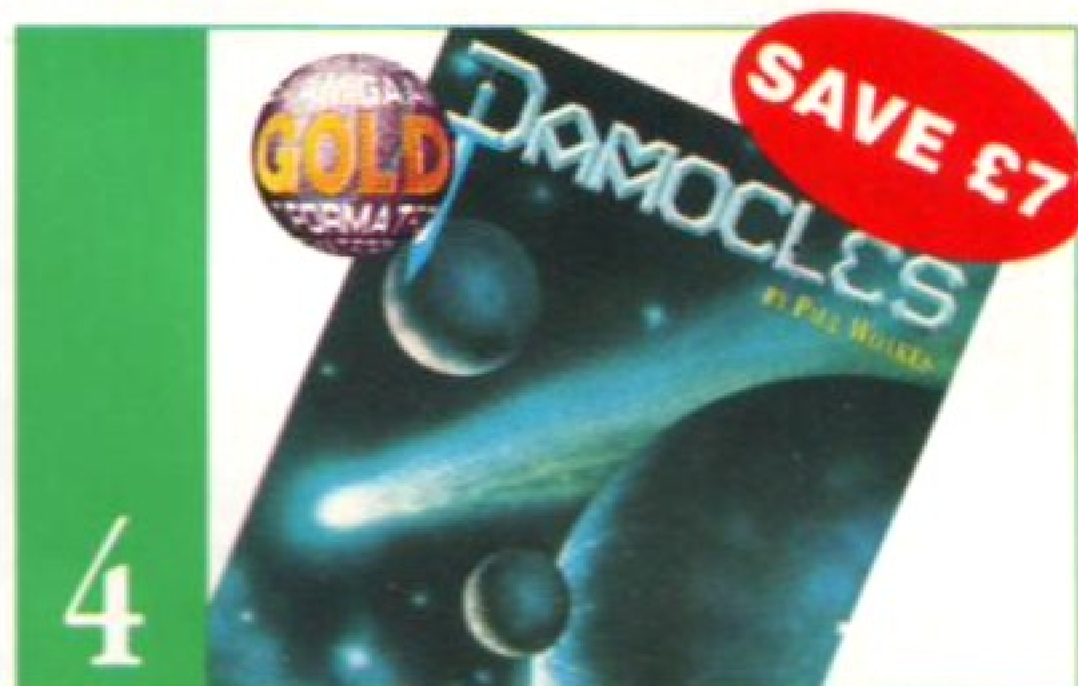
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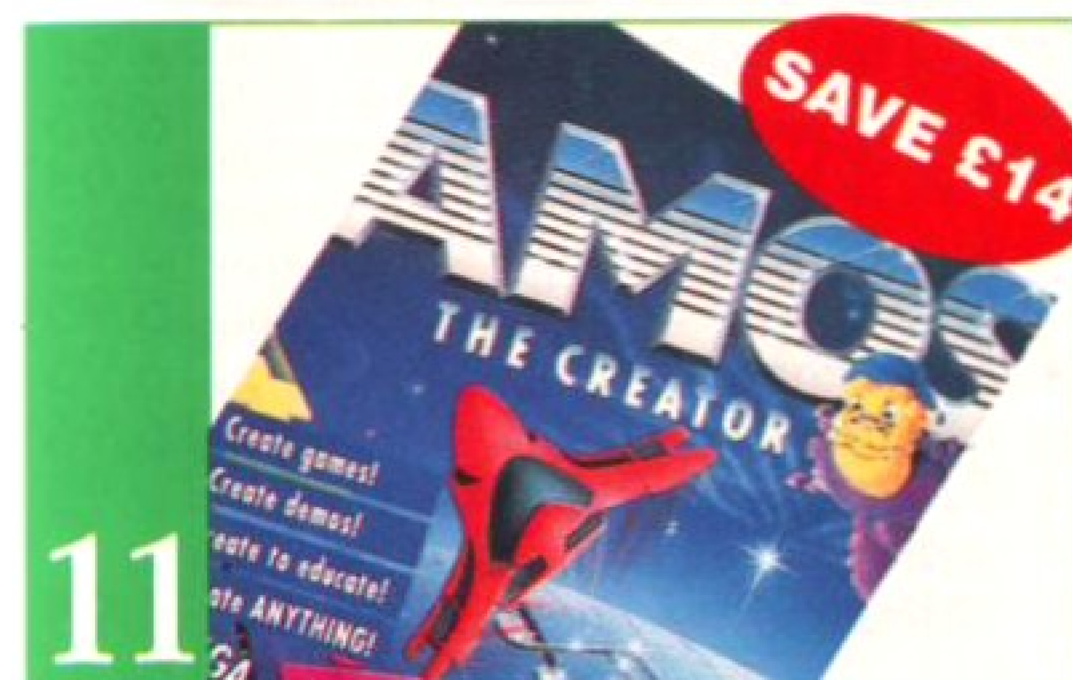
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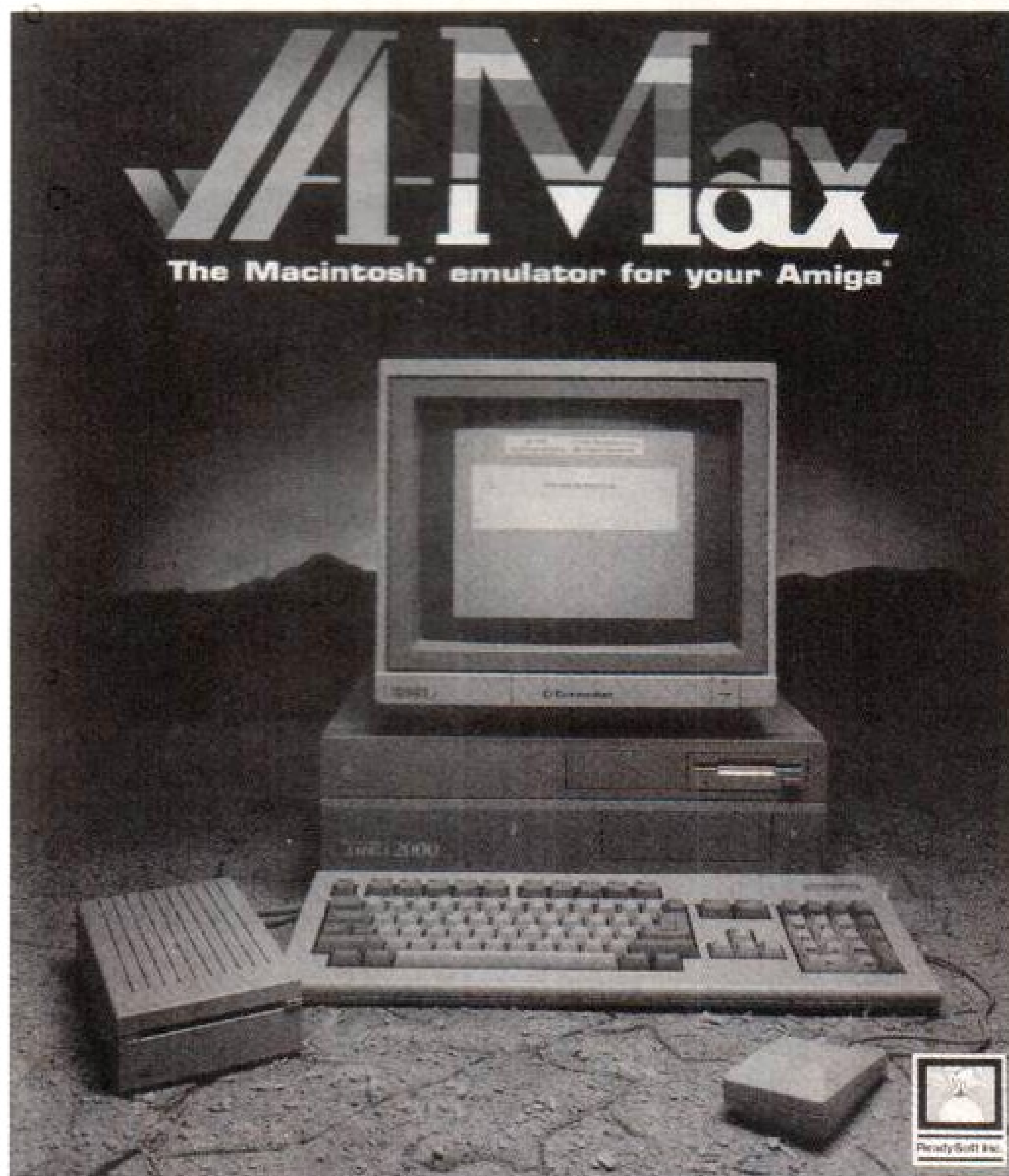
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NOT ENOUGH SLOTS: A-Max 2 is the forthcoming software update for the A-Max Apple Macintosh emulator.

skill? If the answer is yes, then could you please advise me on who it would be best to contact for more information?

Steve Cowie
Angus

Interesting question! I don't know for sure, but I know a few people who might. Third Coast Technologies (0257 472444) sell quite a number of different hard disk controllers for both the A500 and A2000. However, before you approach them it would be wise to find out more about the drive: I suggest that you get in touch with Power Computing (0234 273000), who actually sell Seagate drives for use in the A2000, for more information about the drive. They might even be able to set you up with a hard disk controller for it.

NOT ENOUGH SLOTS

I am considering buying the Bitcon PC board for my A500, as well as an accelerator card and a 2 Meg memory expansion. The problem is that they all sit in the trapdoor slot underneath the machine. Is this a problem? Is there any other way of combining an emulator, accelerator and memory?

If you have megabytes of memory, an accelerator, hard drive, modem etc... will an A500 overload and catch fire?

I've seen some adverts for A-Max 2. Could you tell me when it's coming out in the UK?

A Lamb
Wallington

The Bitcon PC board has to sit in the trapdoor slot. However, accelerator cards don't and neither does extra memory. You can install extra memory in the side slot (on a hard drive card such as the A590, or using the Cortex memory unit reviewed last month).

No. You may well need a more powerful power supply unit to power all those peripherals, but the machine won't catch fire.

As far as I know, A-Max 2 is available now. Unfortunately we haven't had an opportunity to review it yet, but watch this space next month for a review.

BRIDGEBOARD QUIZ

I wish to purchase a PC Bridgeboard for my A2000. I need to use both *Dbase III+* and *Supercalc* to complete my A level computer project. I have a number of questions regarding this piece of hardware which no local computer company can answer for me because they don't sell it.

1) I gather from adverts that there are two types of PC Bridgeboard for the A2000, the XT and the AT. What's the difference?
2) Does the 5.25" disk drive come with the Bridgeboard or will I have to buy this separately?
3) Can I fit it myself?
4) Will it effectively turn my Amiga into a PC so that I can run the two above programs?
5) What software (ie DOS operating system etc) is supplied?
6) Can it use a 40 Meg Quantum SCSI hard disk?
7) Is there any compatibility problems with Amiga software?
8) When it is fitted, does my Amiga boot up as a PC or not?
9) Does it use up any RAM?

Brian Brown
Belfast

1) The XT and AT are different versions of the PC theme. The sole difference is in speed: the AT is faster than the XT.
2) Yes, it comes with a 5.25" disk drive and connecting cables.
3) You can fit it yourself, and you should have no problems.
4) It will indeed run those two programs, as well as virtually any other PC software.
5) It comes with MS-DOS 3.3.
6) No. To fit a SCSI hard drive you will need a different card (a SCSI controller card).
7) As far as I know there aren't any problems with running Amiga software in Amiga mode.
8) Your machine will boot up as an Amiga. By clicking on an icon it will then go into PC mode.
9) Yes, it uses up as much RAM as is available for the PC, which is – I believe – 740K.



DEBUG DOESN'T?

I noticed in my AmigaDOS 1.3 enhancer book that if you type 'LoadWB –Debug' you get an extra hidden menu when Workbench loads. If you select Flushlibs from this you can reclaim memory used by fonts and so on. When I tried the Debug option my Amiga froze solid!

This is presumably because I don't have a '9600 baud serial terminal'. Can you explain what this is and whether or not it's worth me getting one?

Mick Heyes
Nelson

Not so easy to define, is a 9600 baud serial terminal. It's basically just a combination of keyboard, monitor and RS232 socket that you plug into the serial port on the back of the Amiga, and debug it from there. You could use another Amiga for the job, or you could use any other computer with a serial port that can communicate at 9600 baud (that's the rate of communication). It's only worth getting one if you need to do some serious debugging from Workbench, which is frankly not vital at all for most people.













DEBUG DOESN'T: These are ALL 9600 baud serial terminals!

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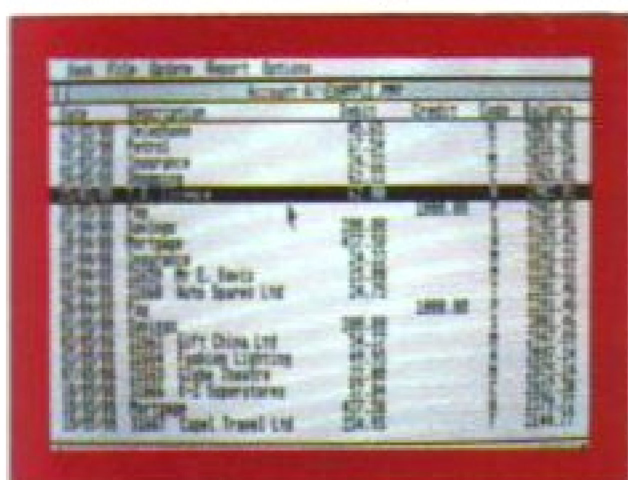


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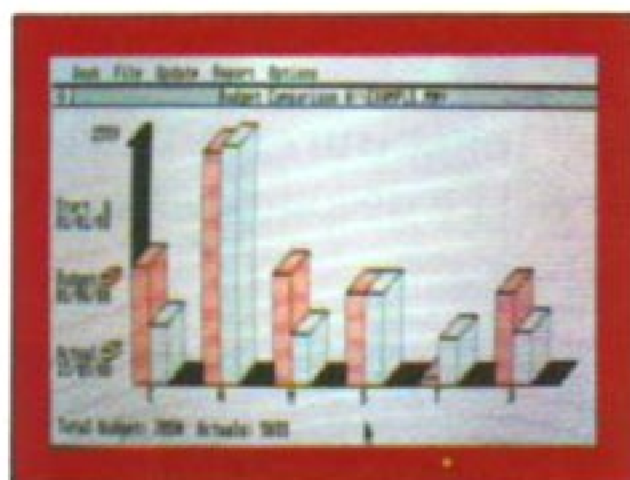
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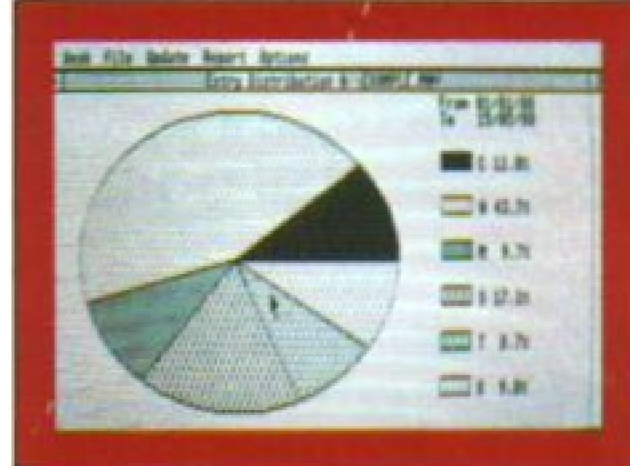
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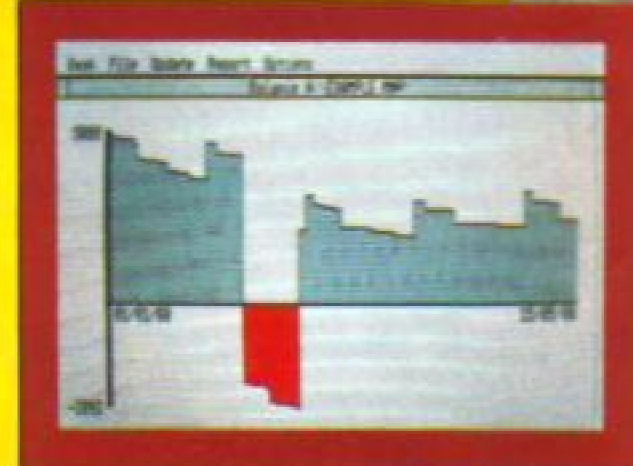
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Letters

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A Serious Complaint?

What sort of computer do you take your screenshots from and what process do they go through to be printed on the page? To me it seems as if the quality is not as good as it used to be.

Alex Dale, Bolton

Our screenshots are obtained in two ways, either as transparencies (colour slides) taken from a 1084 monitor, or as IFF files grabbed from an Amiga, ported over to the Apple Macintoshes on which we do all the layout for the pages and printed from there straight to the film which the printers use to produce the magazine. It is often possible to tell the difference between the two methods, but we think that both of them produce good, high-quality results.

We Are Not Amused

May we, through your magazine, inform the general Amiga public that Senlacware and FRP Productions work are not public domain and subsequently are not freely distributable.

It has come to our attention that certain public domain libraries are distributing a title, namely *Rotating Women*, thereby undermining the whole concept of a scheme which we set up to encourage authors to earn a small commission for their efforts. We will take whatever action is necessary to protect their interests.

We are also disgusted at the amount of hard core pornography that is being carried by these libraries, as well as being sold through your advertising media. We would like to see a governing body set up to bring these so called libraries into line.

Kevin S King
Senlac Software

We were also disturbed about the amount of pornographic material being advertised and steps have been taken to remove it from all ads in Amiga Format. As for the governing body, it's an interesting idea, but who would run it and what powers could be invested in it? Any thoughts?

Rambo

I thought that it was time I wrote to you about my brother Kevin. He has had his Amiga for nearly a year now and still does not know what the term 'RAM Disk' means.

Every time he loads Workbench and sees it on the screen, he removes the disks from the computer and external drive, then rams them back in as hard as he can. This was OK at first, but he's had to send his Amiga back a few times to have the disk drive put back on the right side of his computer.

Could you please explain to Kevin what a RAM Disk is, before his guarantee runs out and he has to actually pay for his Amiga to be repaired?

Stephen Ellis
Stoke-on-Trent

You're pulling my leg... Aren't you? Really? Well, just in case, a RAM disk is a section of the memory that you can reserve to temporarily save data to, in the same way as you do to a floppy disk. However, the data is lost if the power is turned off.

The Cuckoo's Nest

I've heard on the grapevine that the latest craze amongst hackers in order to create such stunning demos, with all those 'blits and blobs' bouncing around the screen, is to 'hit the hardware' directly. As I have always wanted to be a top programmer I decided to make my first demo this way.

Hence I borrowed a sledgehammer, from the nearest guard and proceeded to 'hit the hardware' repeatedly with all my might. All I got for my pains was £399 worth of designer debris. There was not a single blob anywhere. Will you talk to Commodore or shall I? Anyway, two days later my replacement Amiga thing came – they are said to be therapeutic. I had read your music article with keen interest, as I had always wanted to be a top musician. So I bought *Music X*. The hurdle came when I was asked to 'Insert Dongle in Slot'. It was very painful as the gap was only 1cm wide and I forgot to turn off the power. I have not felt the same since. Why don't Commodore make expansion parts bigger? Come on, Commodore!

Finally, I am sorry to say, I have been ripped off again. After reading your article called 'Mapping the World' in Issue13 – best cover yet – I realised I had always wanted to be a top artist, so I bought *Photon Paint 2* – supposedly a paint package. Eagerly I tore the packaging off and opened the box. To my dismay all it contained was another of those square plastic things, loads of paper with words and pictures on – but no instructions were to be found anywhere. I finally surmised that the plastic thing must be a new-fangled brush and when I licked the pictures enough, the colours began to run so I did eventually succeed in painting a beautiful self-portrait. The brush was OK, after practice, and allowed for more detail than my toes alone.

Anyway, that is all I have done this month. All this writing has made me rather peckish. Someone told me that the Amiga has a 'ham mode', so I'm off to investigate now...

Karl Drinkwater
Taunton

The Amiga also has a 'half-brite' mode Karl, we recommend this as the mode for you. If Commodore do introduce a 'loon mode' we'll let you know.

Idle Threat

Please, please, please print this letter or I will switch to reading *ST FORMAT!*

Brian Stewart
Scunthorpe

Happy now?

Squeeze out of the Closet

While looking through an issue of another mag I noticed an advert for upgrades. Well, near the bottom of the page it read: 'Yes, if you bought your Amiga in the last 12 months and it has Kickstart 1.3, then it probably has the 'fatter' 1 meg AGNUS chip. Even though this was not publicised by Commodore, the machines with the '02' AGNUS, have 1 meg chip RAM ability'. I have had my A500 only 2 months and it does have all of the above. I can run some 1 meg programmes but what I want to know is have I got 512K or1000K? Could I run *Dungeon Master?*

Cem Long
Taunton

Over to Tech Ed, Pat... Errm, no. The Fatter Agnus simply allows your Amiga to access a different kind of RAM, chip memory rather than fast. A basic A500 still only has 512K of RAM until you buy an upgrade to gain more.

Novice Friendly

I have owned an Amiga for seven months now and have bought many non-game programs, all of which, I feel, are easy to get to grips with – if a little common sense is used. If the worst comes

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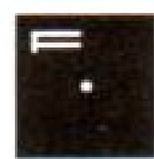
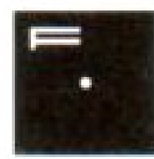
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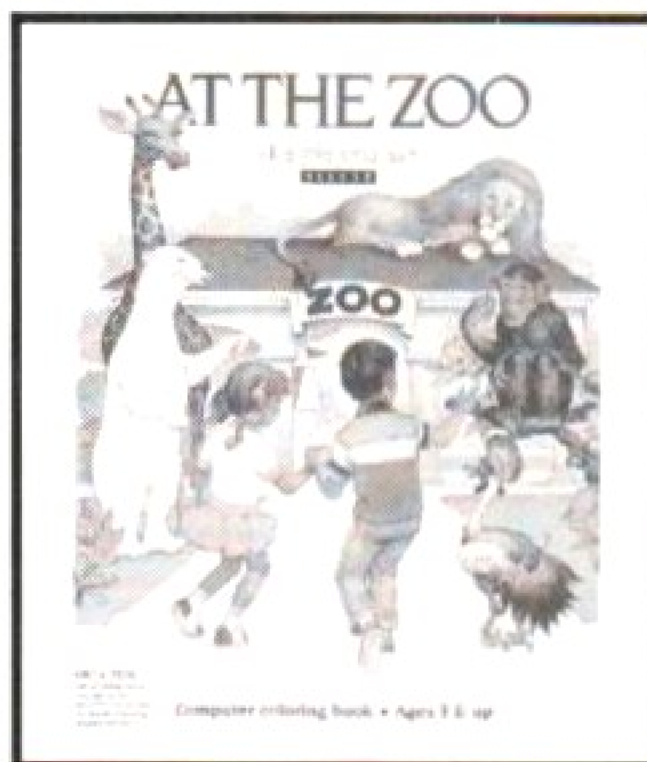









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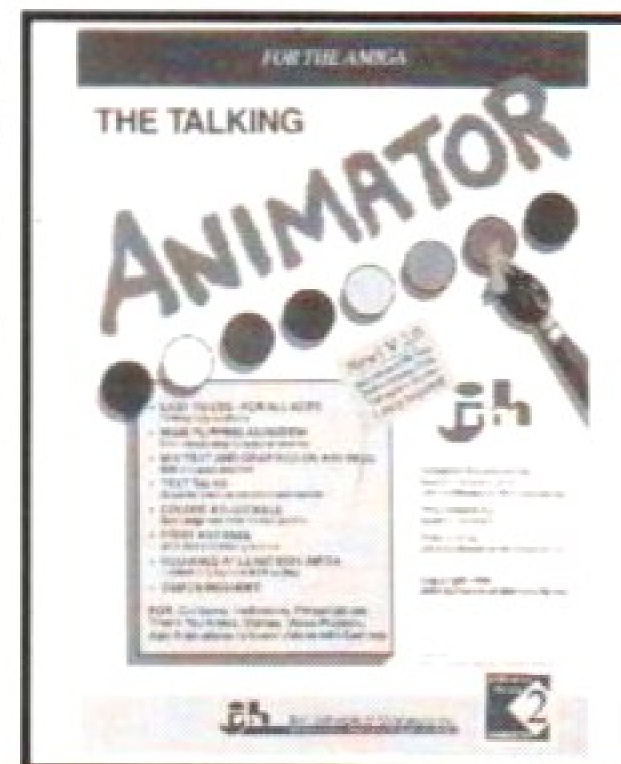


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to the worst and a botch is made, the manual is written, in most instances, in a way which beginners can understand, as well as being helpful to the more experienced user.

When I bought AMOS, as I have no programing knowledge whatsoever, I assumed it, like other packages, would assume no prior knowledge and guide the user, step by step, through the program. When I loaded it, I must admit, I was lost and when in desperation I grabbed the manual this only added to my confusion. What any reviews and the box itself fails to tell the prospective purchaser is that although AMOS is a new 'easy to use' programing package, a fairly good understanding of Basic is required before results can be obtained.

I feel that anyone considering buying AMOS must be aware of this fact, and that Mandarin should re-write their manual. Thus enabling the first time user a chance to use what, from what I've seen, is a very important and impressive utility.

Dave Evans
Birmingham

The thing with AMOS is that it does require a fair bit of learning – you aren't going to program a game without a lot of work. It is possible for a novice to get to grips with it, but don't expect it to be easy: it's as hard to learn as any other programming language, it's just that it allows you to do much more powerful things more quickly.

Business or Pleasure?

There is little doubt that the Amiga 500 is a superb games machine. It has provided my son and I with hours of amusement. However, like many parents, I would like to think that the power of the Amiga could be put to some practical use. By way of an example, I had hoped by now to have been able computerise my Cancer Research Campaign book-keeping system.

Although I have read some of your previous articles concerning various software packages that are available, I have the feeling that many programs are unnecessarily complex and therefore, too expensive for my needs. With various fund-raising activities throughout the year, I need separate accounts for each event allowing for income and expenditure, plus the facility of being able to produce a trial balance at any stage, along with a final print-out of income and expenditure for audit purposes and our AGM. In all I would not expect the number of separate funds to number more than fifteen to twenty at any given time.

The question is, can you recommend appropriate software for this purpose and would our Amiga 500 require any extra memory to run it?

M H Reed
Honorary Treasurer,
Cancer Research Campaign,
Clevedon, Avon

Our expert on this is Mark Smiddy, who wrote a piece on accounts software in Issue 12 which you should look at. System 3 *from Digita at £49 is a reasonable and cheap choice, but you should look carefully to see if it can do what you need.* Arena Accounts *is good, but is complex (based on a double-entry book-keeping method) and expensive at around £150. A sensible alternative may be to use a database program such as* Superbase Personal 2 *or even a spreadsheet, and again Mark's pieces in Issues 10 and 11 will help you on this. You seem to have a good idea of what you want to do, so making a choice from these options will hopefully not be too difficult.*

Will the Real One Stand Up?

I could not help but notice that each month you make the claim that you are 'Britain's Best-Selling Magazine for Amiga Owners'. Did you know that another Amiga magazine also makes the same claim – 'Britain's Best Selling Amiga Magazine' – worded slightly differently? Which of you are we to believe? Surely you both can't be the 'Best'.

Incidentally which Amiga magazine is the best-selling, I would really like to know? (It doesn't hurt to be slightly modest.)

Stewart Robertson
Glenrothes

Amiga Format *is undeniably the best-selling Amiga magazine. Our*

most recent ABC figure (the Audit Bureau of Circulations official, registered monthly circulation) is considerably higher than any other Amiga mags. It currently stands at 57,123, which is the average sales each month for the first six months of 1990. Sales were increasing all through that period so that at the end of it we were actually selling well over 60,000 copies a month. Now we are well past the 70,000 mark and with sales still climbing every month. Watch this space for news of the next ABC figure sometime around February '91.

Cowards

I've been an Amiga owner for six months now, and have happily zapped aliens and bludgeoned dragons, but recently I've developed the urge to do some serious damage to humans. So, while at the computer show at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Victoria, I bought *Universal Military Simulator*. I rushed home, sweating with anticipation, donned tight breeches and a fore-and-aft cocked hat, and as 'Old Nosey' I gave Napoleon the thrashing he so soundly deserved – dead Frenchies everywhere. Then I pulled on my grey slouch hat, sat on a horse, adopted a Virginia accent, and as Bobby Lee persuaded Meade and his damned Yankies that Gettysburg was not where he wanted to spend three sunny July days – stiff Bluecoats were littered across the whole landscape.

Similarly, with a pair of thigh-high leather boots and a saucepan on my head, I was Olly Cromwell giving those Royalist nancy boys a hard time at Marston Moor – perfumed hankies all over the place.

But wait – what's this? Another disk – make your own armies. Great! Now it was leather jackboots, coal scuttle helmet and a Tiger tank, bought from an iffy second hand car dealer based in Peckham, and as SS Obergruppenführer von Manns, I prepared to show Ivan a thing or two. But Disk 2 didn't share my enthusiasm, it informed me it had a read-write error. Sure enough, on *X-copy Checkdisk*, two little red sixes popped up – obviously a Commie plot.

What should I do? Line the two red sixes up against a wall and shoot them, or write to Telecomsoft, 74 New Oxford Street, WC1? I decided on the latter. After all, I'm a reasonable, well-balanced bloke. Three weeks later my lovely postlady popped the letter back through my letter box. 'Gone away' it said. Now I ask you, was it really necessary for Telecomsoft to do a runner, just because my Disk 2 was naff?

So what do I do now? My crumpled uniforms are gathering dust in a corner of the room, the Tiger tank failed its MOT and I've started sucking my thumb – help!

Obergruppenführer
von Manns (SS, Retired)
Staines

Telecomsoft's software labels were bought by MicroProse, who now have the rights to Rainbird and Firebird. Your best bet is to contact them on 0666 504326.

Sound and Vision

After reading the review of *Their Finest Hour* in the June issue of *Amiga Format*, I decided to purchase the game. I finally received the game, six weeks after ordering it from Softsellers Ltd. I quickly removed the shrink wrapper from the box and began to glance through the reference card and to my horror I read: 'You can play *Their Finest Hour* on a 512K machine, but you'll hear no sound effects and certain graphic enhancements will be missing...'

I was devastated! 'No sound effects'? What do you mean no sound effects? One of the reasons I bought an Amiga was for the excellent sound. I began to play the game but gave up after a while as there was about as much atmosphere as a dead IBM. So I decided to buy an expansion and now the sound effects blast out of my stereo, supplying an abundance of atmosphere.

Please in future, to avoid another disappointment, state in the review what effect not having 1 meg makes.

Edmund Carty
Birmingham

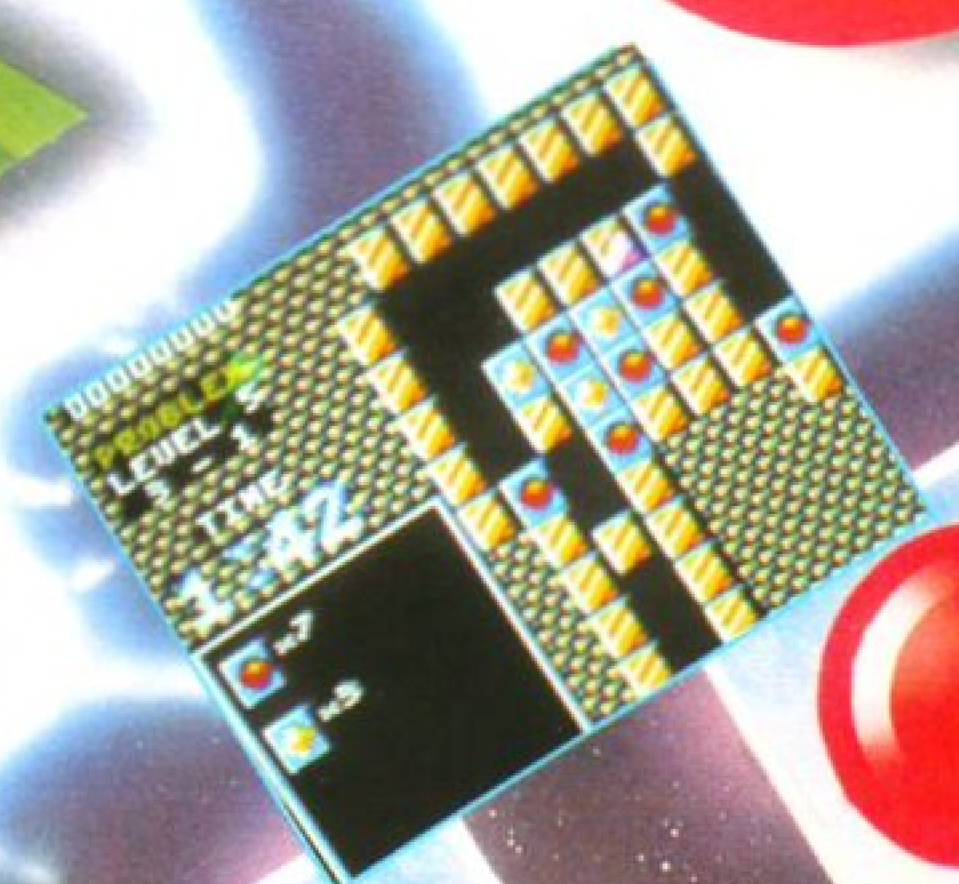
We do try to be thorough on that sort of thing, sorry we missed that one. It is becoming increasingly important as authors use the available memory for things like the instant replay function on Indianapolis 500 *or the enhanced droid library in* Paradroid '90, *t*

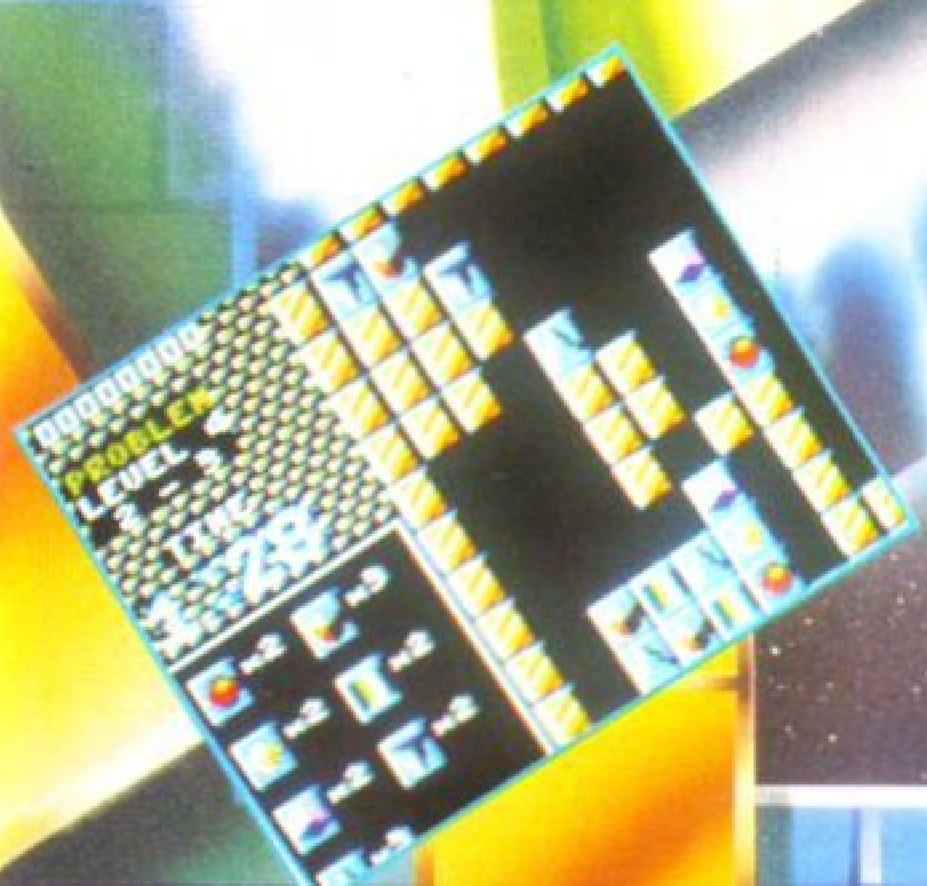
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hat we keep you informed of whether there are games that don't need 1 meg to run but use it for improvements, faster loading and the like. We will continue to try to inform you of these things in all reviews.

A Five Year Old

I fancied a bit of programming, so I started by reading the AmigaBasic manual. It took some time and when I'd finally finished I thought to myself 'What the hell does all this mean?'

I couldn't understand most of what I had read. I mean, what does 'operands' mean? Do you know any books which explain Basic in English that a five-year-old would understand?

Chris Rawinski
High Wycombe

Tech Ed Pat answers: I suspect that you believe the hype about programming being a doddle. Programming demands a certain level of commitment and discipline, and nobody can program to a decent level without those two qualities.

Having brought you back to reality, I suggest that you look at AmigaBASIC Inside and Out, *by Rugheimer and Spanik, ISBN 0-916439-87-9, published by Abacus. This is a comprehensive tutorial, starting simply with just the fundamentals.*

Incidentally, five-year-olds seem to learn to program by spending a few years hunched over their keyboards, bashing at random keys, and generally missing out on the ageing process to some degree or other.

L-Driver

I am rather ...... off with the state of the software market. I am sure many other people suffer from this complaint. No, this isn't another one of those anti-piracy letters. I am one of a rare breed. I can't play computer games!

Why the hell can't anyone make a really easy game? I have just been playing *Stunt Car Racer*. It's a brilliant game but I can't get anywhere on it. I followed your tips in this month's issue of *AF* but keep missing all the corners. I don't want more tips. I'm fed up of waiting for cheats to turn up before I get anything out of game. I don't like buying a game and watching friends complete them with ease.

I have obtained a veritable army of games in search of one that I am any good at. Out of about fifty games I have completed only one. *Future Wars*, for example, was brilliant but I saw the cheat and was tempted to read it to finish the last bit.

Please could you title a section of your mag entitled: 'Good Games for Crap Players'. The software companies have had enough money out of me already. I want some games reviewed by you that are more tactical than 'If you see it feed it to the Killer Tomato regime'.

Tim Lockwood

Your best bet is to check our reviews for whenever we say 'it's too easy to complete.' This is a surefire sign of when a game might be right up your street.

Collector's Item

Is there any chance of the early issues of *AF* ever being available again. I have only recently become an Amiga owner and so only have the issues from 11 onwards. I have ordered 8, 9 and 10 from your Back Issues department, but would appreciate the chance to have a copy of the earlier issues. I would imagine I am not the only person in this predicament.

Rabb
Darlington

A reprint of the early issues is extremely unlikely, so your best bet is to get hold of the book Get the Most out of Your Amiga, *edited by long-suffering dep. ed. Damien, which contains some of the practical information contained in the early issues of AF.*

Vivid Imagination

After the advent of Cyberspace recently I started to think: 'Where is this pursuit of the Total Realism Dream going to end?'

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be long before somebody manages to get computers to interact directly with peoples' brains. Some scientists have already had succcessful results, I believe.

What will this mean to us, you may ask? Imagine if the home computer of the future could stimulate our senses directly, synthetically producing senses that convince us we are in Middle Earth: smelling the forests, hearing the birds and feeling the wind in our hair. The computer would take control of our brain and send us into our own imaginations.

I remember seeing a film – which I thought was far fetched at the time – which was based on this very concept. What was it called? It was made in the early Seventies when Pong was state-of-the-art technology. You could pay to be hooked up to the computer and take part in a scenario of your choice.

Unfortunately the computer was bugged and things often went wrong. For instance, in one scene, the customers were on a Game Safari. The computer was supposed to have a failsafe which stopped fear and paranoia controlling the events, but a gameplayer was pounced upon and mauled by a lion – which he imagined he'd already wounded. The gameplayer was literally frightened to death by his own imagination. Was the story writer of this film a philosopher?

In the Seventies the idea in the film seemed just too fantastic. But, just remember that if we told anybody in those days the specification of a home computer called the Amiga, arriving circa 1985, we would have been laughed at. In ten years from now this film could've been based on a true story.

All this talk of today's computers causing psychological disorders is a load of crap. I think we should pause to think just a wee bit. The more real a game becomes then the more effect it has on our emotions and fears. There will come a day where it will be difficult to tell real life from a simulated one. It wouldn't just be psychological disorder, more like total confusion.

So the warning is this. As exciting as gamesplaying is I think in the near future that there will be a limit to the realism allowed. We wouldn't want somebody stabbing a guy and saying, 'Well, he looked so much like a Wight from behind I thought I was still at Middle Earth' would we?

Ray Smith
Fife

Interesting stuff Ray. I'm intrigued by the posibility of magazines that do the same thing – you plug into them and your brain gets a guided tour of new products, information etc – it would save an awful lot of paper.

A Right Ding Dong

At the risk of prolonging the 'Dr Bell is a...' issue, may I add some final remarks from a recent experience of my own. The name – and a few minor details – have been changed to protect the individual – but otherwise this is a true story.

Three months ago Derek, aged19, had never smoked or drunk alcohol. Being a keen Amiga user, he kept himself entertained nightly by playing games. Since his parents had sadly split up, there was little he could do.

Then disaster struck. The house was burgled and his precious Amiga, with its collection of – for once, original – games taken too.

Over the next couple of months, with nothing to entertain him, Derek sought refuge among the arcades and night clubs of our great town. There he met with some of the more colourful residents of his area and slowly fell in with the wrong crowd. He began drinking and inevitably, being perhaps a little too impressionable, started smoking too.

Today, a new Amiga on his desk, Derek is reverting back to his old self. He has almost kicked the booze – the smoking, hopefully, will stop later.

Mark Smiddy
Redcar

I did say last month that I had closed this particular debate, but this first-hand experience of computers having a good effect was too important to leave out. Now it really is closed, unless you can come up with something totally original about it...

Ding Dong 2

I am also in complete agreement with Dr Bell's views regarding

computer games and their adverse effects on youngsters, having myself suffered several distasteful experiences. Here is a typical scenario:

There are 10 seconds to full time in a deciding match of *Kick Off 2*, when Player A scores an unbelievably feeble goal and wins. Player A: 'Yesss! Pick that one out, sonny!'
B: 'Spawny sod. Just 'cos my goalie's crap'.
Player A: 'Ha! You sad man! Eat mud, S M Fisher! Ha Ha Ha!'

Player A then repeatedly replays the goal. B then repeatedly beats A around the head and shoulders with his joystick, cursing profusely.

As can be seen, there is a very real problem which needs immediate investigation. The following example will serve to convince you.

Once, while I was playing *Bugaboo the Flea* on my Spectrum, poor Bugaboo fell from the very top ledge of the cavern to the floor far below. This so incensed me that I killed and dismembered the next three callers to my house, one of whom was my dear old Granny. I then dissolved them in household bleach and hid them behind the wallpaper in the lounge. Scary, huh? I am six years old and an axe-wielding homicidal maniac. Please help.

Clive Beale (6)
Birkenhead

This is precisely the sort of sensationalist ranting that the media loves – so I've printed it.

Right to Reply

I am writing to complain about the comments made in the last few paragraphs of Neil Davey's article. In it he comments, 'Some PD houses make a profit on what they sell, under the guise of carrying charges... Most reputable libraries charge only £1.50 to £2.00, so be warned'.

The reason I started supplying PD was because I believe that every Amiga owner has the right to have access to all Amiga PD software. In order to get the message over to the 200,000 plus Amiga owners in this country you need to advertise regularly and professionally. It annoyed me when I read the above comments made by your company slighting us as unreputable.

If it were left to the small one-man-bands, only a few thousand people would experience Public Domain software. PD unfortunately has to be big business even if the product is supposed to be given away free! If these small guys start to expand they will also have to pay VAT (legally they should do already), employ staff – who will not work for free – and pay out for very expensive advertising, which as a profit-making employer you will no doubt be aware of. Without the advertising all us sharks provide your magazines with, where would your readers purchase PD from?

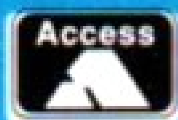
Apart from the above, many of the authors of the software actually recommend a charge of £3.00 per disk when they ask us to include their software in our collection and they are certainly aware of the price we will charge when we distribute their software. These people do not find the price offensive and certainly our 17,000 regular customers do not find it so either.

If we had all the 200,000 Amiga owners in the country as clients we would have a multi million pound turn over, employing about 100 staff! Whereas we charge £3.00 a disk so that we can afford to pay for the advertisements, employ four people full time, pay VAT, Income Tax, National Insurance, huge overheads eg. rental of office space, paying bills like telephone, fax, electricity etc., create and give away free, a professionally produced catalogue, as well as a personal service and try to get the message, and the PD, over to the people.

Andrew Bishop
Bishop's Stortford

You rightly point out that the overheads involved in a PD operation can be large, but you are being rather over sensitive to the comments contained in the article. The remarks you quote were intended as a general guideline to the new user on pricing levels for PD and are deliberately vague, stating that "MOST reputable PD libraries" charge those prices, not "ALL reputable PD libraries." We were not trying to suggest that those who charged more were not being honest, but left it to the buying public to decide whether they were getting a fair

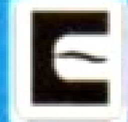
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deal for the price they pay. It is a tricky area and frankly, whatever we suggested counted as a reasonable price would probably have upset someone.

The Fourth Protocol

Unfortunately, thanks to a new competitor of yours, the Lamer II virus has been widely distributed among the country's Amiga owners most of which, I imagine, will be *Format* readers. I couldn't see an ABC figure in the magazine but it must be a couple of tens of thousands. Imagine that as the starting figure for a viral infection process!

I don't know anything about inter-magazine protocol but it would seem to me a good idea to post some kind of warning of the threat in *Format*. Virus X v4.0 as supplied on CoverDisk 9 is effective against this virus and the documentation file contains information about the damage that the virus can cause.

Lamer is quite a nasty little beast, far more dangerous than Byte Bandit or SCA. It lives, like these other two, in boot blocks and every couple of resets or disk changes it writes the string 'Lamer' over a data block.

Simon Hudson
Huddersfield

Thanks for the warning.

Free Art

I am writing to ask if you know of any art packages on the PD range. I am a house-husband with one baby daughter and I can't afford to pay the full price.

Daniel Russell
Eastmoor, Wakefield

Pat speaks: Skypaint V2.0 is on Amiganuts 658, and is quite fun to use. It remembers all the different changes you've made to a picture, so correcting mistakes is easy. Qualitywise it's not brilliant, but you can certainly let your creativity flow with it. Amiganuts are on 0703 785680.

Putting your Shirt On It

I have a bit of info for you which, after reading AF Issue 16, I thought may come in useful. It is concerning one of the letters, asking if there is a company which will print Amiga graphics onto T shirts. Well, there is. They are Wizard Software of 20 Hadrian Drive, Redhills, Exeter, Devon EX14 1SR. If you send a disk to them containing the picture, logo etc that you want printed, they will print it on a white cotton/polyester T shirt. You must state the size required when ordering (S, M, L or XL) and your disk is returned. It costs £14.95, P&P included.

OK? I hope this is of use.

Dale Wilks
Cambridge

It was in response to a letter from N Abia of Stranraer in the last issue that we confessed we knew of no-one who could print DPaint pictures onto a T shirt. Thanks very much for your advice, Dale, but just in case any readers would rather do it themselves at home, we have also become aware of some other DIY alternatives.

We suggested that one way to get the required effect would be to print full-colour images onto heat transfer paper, using your own colour printer with ordinary colour inks. There is also a back-to-front version of this process, in which you print to ordinary computer paper but use special heat transfer inks.

Care Electronics of 800 St Albans Road, Garston, Watford, Herts WD2 6NL, can supply heat transfer inks in red, green, blue, yellow and orange, on ribbons for Star LC10, Star NL10/NX10, Epson FX100, Epson FX80, Epson LX80, Citizen 120D and Panasonic KXP1080 printers. Price is £11.50 including VAT except for the Star LC10 four-colour model, the ribbon for which costs £17.25. Care also point out that the ribbons are multi-strike so they do last well and if you want a bulk order for use, say, in schools, they do have a discount service.

Ed at Care mentions that they have a few customers who use Atari STs with a simple set-up involving a digitiser and a colour Star LC10 to make a living taking pictures of people and transferring them to T shirts. "Better than a proper job, I suppose" he says.

One last option is to print out your image and go to a professional colour photocopyist to get it copied to heat-transfer paper.

GURU'S M

OH DEARY, DEARY ME

To clear up any confusion that might have been caused by last month's Contents and review pages, Captive is most definitely by Mindscape, not Mindscope or anybody else.

The disk pages also had a problem, a couple of bits of text overran – there was nothing crucial, but you'll find what was missing on this issue's disk pages.

NEXT MONTH

Next month's issue is on sale from December 13th and for more on this extra-special, bumper-sized, unbelievably good value mag see Page 14 of this issue. Miss this one and you're missing history!

WINNERS

ELECTRONIC ZOO COMP

The answers were: obvious. Oh, all right, B,C and C. The five winners of a disk drive are: MJ Kay, Westhoughton; Adam Wright, Thorplands; R Downer, Crediton; Mike Blackwell, High Wycombe; Justin Stanford, Selsey.

CHALLENGE COMP

The answers were: B, wrong and B – we accepted anything for question 2. The winner of the tracksuit is: PR Grice, Birkenhead. The 10 second prizes of sports bags go to: G Keeble, Canvey Island; Stephen Hill, Erdington; Ian Slator, Hoddesdon; Jeremy Mankin, Stockton-on-Tees; S Booth, Hadleigh; John A Berry, Coulsdon; SC Wood, Wincobank; Priyesh Shingadia, Pinner; Ashley Searle, Leeds; W Charlesworth, Reading. 10 third prizes of the Treble Champions game go to: Craig Nottage, South Woodham Ferrers; David Chan, Kenilworth; T Anderson, Newton Hall; Raj Singh, Heaton; Richard Walker, Sedgley; MM Fields, Dronfield Woodhouse; AH Foster, Bassett; Carl Kuttelwascher, Camberley; James Eaglesfield, Hemingbrough; David Hitchen, Middleton.

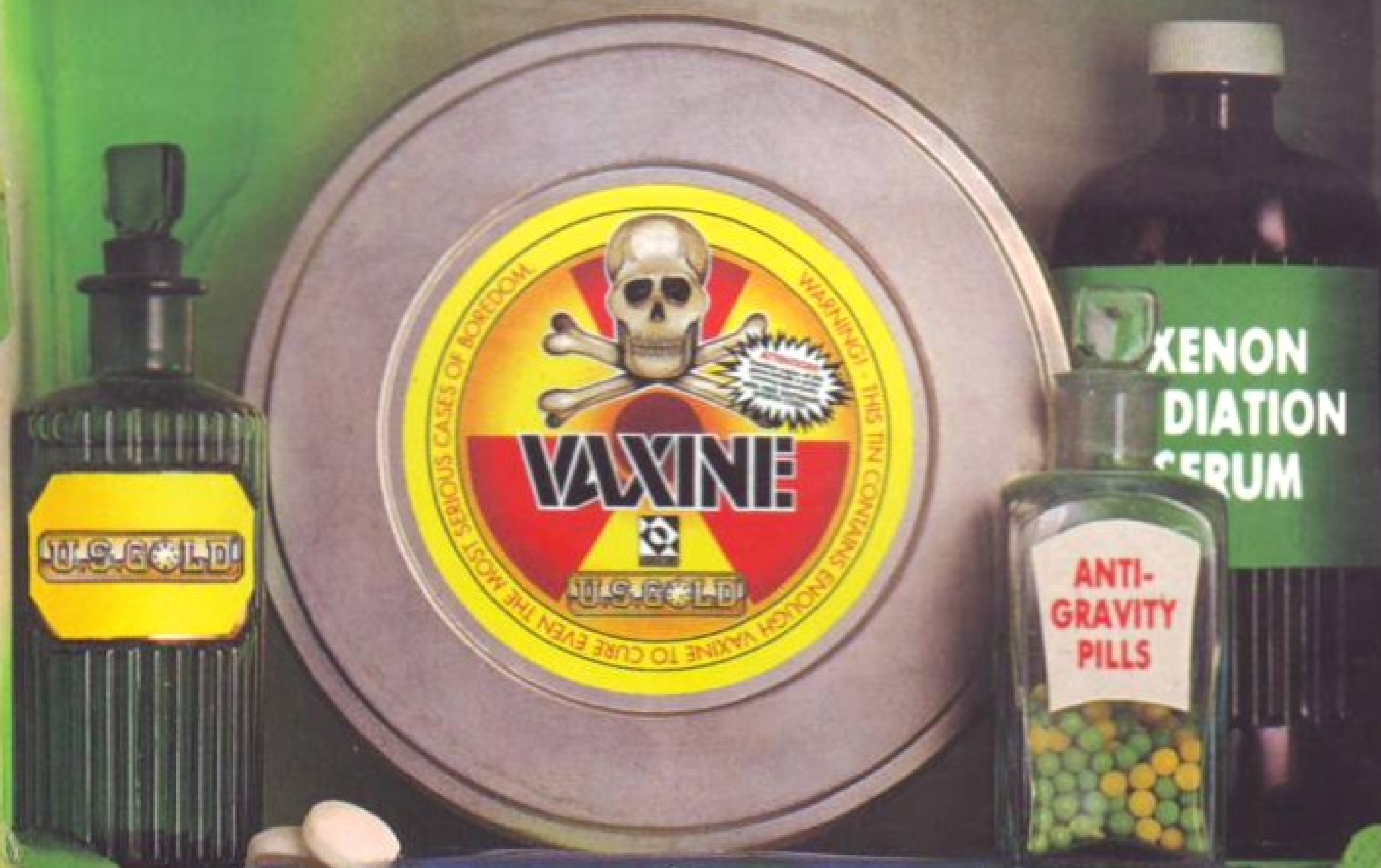
SHOPPER COMP

We allowed a bit of leeway with the answers because some prices didn't include VAT. They were: £3.90 for 10 disks on Page 179; £216.96 (excluding VAT) or £239 (inc VAT) for a 1084 on Pages 208 and 216 or 127 respectively; £59.99 for an A1010 second drive on Page 146. The winner of a trolley spree at the Shopper Show is: J Grant, Streatham. The three runners-up who get tickets to the show are: David Brown, Crawley; GM Dibley, East Dulwich; David Fairweather, Blackburn.

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